





THE THIRD
VOLUME
OF
Farewel Sermons,

Preached By
Some LONDON and Country Ministers,
VIZ.

Mr. Cradicot.

Mr. Bull.

Mr. Pledger.

Mr. Lamb of Dorsetshire.

Mr. Slater. And

Mr. Gaspine of Somerset-sh.

With a late S E R M O N of Mr. Watsons
againſt Popery.

Whereunto is added eighth S E R M O N S
Preached by way of farewel to a Country
Auditory, by Mr. Joſeph Cooper.

Rev. 3. 11.

*Behold I come quickly, hold that faſt, which thou
haſt, that no man take thy Crown.*

London, Printed, 1663.

Anne Withmson

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To the READER.

Reader,

THE kind acceptance the two former VO-
LUMNS of Farewel SERMONS Prea-
ched August 17. 1662.

B Y

Mr. Calamy.	}	Dr. Jacomb.
Dr. Manton.		Dr. Bates.
Mr. Caryl.		Mr. Watson.
Mr. Case.		Mr. Lye.
Mr. Jenkins.		Mr. Mede. And
Mr. Baxter.		Mr. Ash, Funeral Ser.

Dr. Seaman.	Mr. Beermans.
Mr. Venning.	Mr. Naltons Funeral Ser.
Mr. Brook.	preached by Dr. Horton
Mr. Collins.	Mr. Calamy, Preached
Mr. Newcomen, of Essex	Decemb. 28. 1662.

Together with Mr. Lyes Sermon and Rehearsals
at the Conclusion of the last Morning Exercise at
All-Hallows Lumbard-street. And the prayers of
A 3 Several

To the Reader.

Several Divines) hath found amongst the people
of God in this Kingdom * and else where, hath in-
* Now printing couraged us to publish these which makes this Col-
in Dutch lection much more compleated then any yet extant,
in Hol- and to the end, that those that have already bought
land, any of the parts, might not be necessitated to have
the same over again; it is so ordered in this Col-
lection, that any of the three Parts may be bought
alone, or all bound up together.

Reader, It may be thy expectations are,
that something might be said in commendations
of the ensuing Sermons; which task we shall not
undertake to do, but rather, make it our request,
that thou wouldest lengthen out thy patience to the
thorow perusal of them, and then thou wilt have
cause to do it thy self; These their Labours will
praise them in the Gates, Prov. 31. 31. They are
indeed so plain, as that the simple may understand
them; Yet not so unpolished, as the friendly, and
judiciously curious may scorn them, what is here
presented to thee, is expressed in their own words,
as well as could be taken, and are published by, and
compared with the exactest Copies that could be
gotten.

Let not any prejudice fore-stall thee, as that
some of them thou never heardest of, or the like;
but rather as Philip said to Nathaniel, Come and
see, and then thou mayest find further Cause of
Lamentation that Englands sins (for her non-im-
provement of such choice Mercies, and rich Pri-
viledges

To the Reader.

viledges) hath laid aside in so many places in the Land, such eminent sons of Sion, whose Counsels, Prayers, Experiences might have been very useful in the directing, helping, and comforting many weak, doubting, and despondent souls in their journey Heaven-wards.

But herein thou mayest likewise reckon it a great Mercy (that although the Authors of these ensuing Sermons are laid aside) thou mayest thus see them and read them, take heed of slighting this Mercy likewise: But let thy Eye affect thy heart, be watchful and sober, keeping thy Lamp shining, thy Loynes girt, thy Conscience awake, thy Garment unspotted, and thy spiritual Armor constantly on, fearing God more than men, Sin more than sufferings, thy self more than others, living basely, more then dying Christ-anly.

Farewel.

The first of these is the fact that the
 Government has been unable to secure
 the necessary funds to carry out its
 policy of non-interference in the
 internal affairs of the country. This
 has been due to a variety of causes,
 including the fact that the Government
 has been unable to secure the necessary
 funds to carry out its policy of non-
 interference in the internal affairs of
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 to secure the necessary funds to carry
 out its policy of non-interference in
 the internal affairs of the country.

[illegible]

1944



Mr. Cradecots Farewell Sermon.

Phil. 4. latter part of verse 9.

— *And heard, and seen in me do, and the God of peace shall be with you.*



From this Verse we may observe three Doctrines.

Doct. 2. *That the Peoples eyes must be taught by the Ministers holiness of life, as well as their ears by the Ministers soundness of Doctrine.*

Paul did not teach one thing, and practice another; he practised as he preached, and he both practised and preached the forementioned Duties in the Verse before the Text. And to this end the Lord appointed a Ministry to be perpetuated through all ages of the World: And it is the Lords appointment, that peoples ears should be taught with sound Doctrine, to the matter and manner of it; and it is the Lords appointment, that the peoples eyes should be taught by the Ministers holiness of life, as well as their ears by their soundness in Doctrine: And this is necessary for the Minister himself, and necessary for the people. No marvail then that a faithful Ministry is the But of the Devils malice, of his craft and

cruelty, and that the Devil hath in all Ages attempted and endeavoured utterly to overthrow the Ministry, or to poyson and fly-blow it shamefully: and this is the method whereby Satan hath endeavoured to fly-blow the Ministry. Why, then see the folly and madness of those people who affect or cry up those Ministers who do not teach their people with sound Doctrine, or a holy life; and whether there be not such Ministers which do not teach their peoples ears with soundness of Doctrine, or their eyes with a holy life? and whether there be not such people as do cry up such Ministers? and whether or no such people as are not guilty of spiritual folly and madness? judge ye.

Doct. 2. *A Ministers soundness in Doctrine, and holiness of life and conversation, doth lay a very great obligation on a people to a due consciencious practice of every commanded duty.* The Apostle we see, maketh his Preaching and Practice an argument to excite the *Philippians* to the forementioned commanded duties, as in the Text, and the verse before the Text.

As first of all, the Appellations and Titles given in Scripture to such Ministers whose Doctrine is sound, and whose Lives and Conversations are exemplarily holy.

They are called, 1. *The Salt of the earth*, as *Matth. 5. 13.* read that, saith Christ to those great Teachers of the Gospel, and Dispensers of his Oracles, and in them to their Successors. Salt hath two things in it, namely, Sharpness and Savouriness: and thus Ministers, first must rebuke sharply, that people may be found in the Faith, as *Paul* joyns *Titus*, as in *Titim 1. 13.* And secondly, Ministers must speak avoury things to every person, and to every palat, that their people may be savoury both in heart and life; but to be as unfavoury as stinking carion in

in the nostrils of the Almighty God, under such a savoury and seasoning Ministry, this is woful. It is the nature of salt to cause barrenness where it seasoneth not; therefore we read of *Abimelech*, *Judges 9. 45.* that he sowed the City with salt: So that the people who live under a sharp and savoury Ministry, and are not seasoned therewith, and preserved from putrefaction in their sin and corruption thereby, their case is very dangerous.

2. They are called again *the Light of the World*, in *Matth. 5. 14.* read that. As for their Doctrine, *the salt of the Earth*; so for their Lives, *the Light of the World*; and they must therefore lead convincing lives, as *John 5. 35.* read that; it is there said of *John the Baptist*, our blessed Lord and Saviour gives him this commendatory Character, or Testimonial, *That he was a burning and a shining light*; burning in himself, and shining to others: Or as it was said of *Basil*, *Thundring in his Doctrine, and lightning in his Life and Conversation.* Now if good Ministers be the light of the world, then hence we may infer.

Inference 1. That without a godly faithful Ministry the world lieth in darkness, ignorance, error, sin and misery. It is said of *Galilee*, in *Matth. 4. 16.* *That the people who sate in darkness, saw great light*, read that. Why, had they not Priests and Levites? I answer, they had indeed sorry Priests, but they had not a faithful Ministry; and therefore the Evangelist tells them *they sate in darkness*, yea, *in the region and shadow of death*, notwithstanding the sorry sottish Priests they had: But when they had a faithful Ministry, they are said to see a great Light. Again, If good Ministers be the light of the world, then we may draw this Corollary, That to be offended at the light of a faithful and powerful Ministry, argues and speaks a very sinful and wretched frame of heart. Nothing is so excellent, but some will be

displeased at it and with it, as *Eccles. 11. 7.* Even the light it self we know is offensive to sore eyes; and thus the burning and shining light of a godly and faithful Ministry is offensive and terrible to some; but who are they? sore diseased souls, the Lord knows. The Ark of God, which was the monument of his presence, whom did it smite with Emrods, but the *Philistins*? What then is the Ale-bench more easie to thee then thy pew is to thee in this place? then a Conscience, Soul-searching Sermon? what, art thou offended at a powerful faithful Ministry? Oh fearful plague-tokens!

3. To do all that man can do to put out the Light, this is worse. It is the most horrid, hellish plot that can be assigned or named; and of this I am sure the Church of *Rome* cannot plead Not guilty, which like the Scribes & Pharisees, take away from the people the key of knowledge, and shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men. How terribly doth our blessed Lord thunder-strike those stupid Pharisees for this! *Matth. 23. 13.* And as did the Pharisees, so did the Papists: For 1. Heretofore they made it a mortal sin to read Gods Word. 2. Afterwards, they clogged the liberty they granted with such cautions and restrictions, as that very few escaped of those that were within the reach of the Inquisition. 3. Those clogs contented not; but now it is thought fit utterly to deny liberty; and can there be a more horrible hellish plot assigned then this, to take from people their knowledge of Salvation? And thus the Church of *Rome*, whether they have Church-snuffers or not, to be sure they have Church-extinguishers, and various means to put out the light. O fearful is this! as in *John 3. 19. 20.* *That is the reason men hate the Light, because their deeds are evil.*

Again, If good Ministers be the Light of the world, then hence may we draw this Conclusion, That it concerns

cerns people very neerly to believe in the light, and to walk in the light, and to work while the light lasteth, as our blessed Saviour exhorteth in *John* 12. 35. 36. read that. God sets up his Ministers as Lights, as Candles on the candlesticks of his Church, to awaken men, and to light men unto eternal life: And ought not people to pray hard, and to work hard while the light lasteth? God removes many times the candle and candlestick, and makes the Sun to go down at noon-day, as *Amos* 8. 9. so darkens the Earth at clear day. Good Ministers they are called the light of the world, and they are called,

3. Stars, as in *Revel.* 3. 1. And who are meant by the seven Stars? *Rev.* 1. ult. they are the Angels, that is, the Ministers of the seven Churches. Now the Stars are said to affect those inferiour bodies. 1. By their influence. And thus godly and faithful Ministers, by the influence of their lips they feed many with the bread of life. 2. By the regular motions of their lives they confirm many. 3. By the light of both they confirm many: One while their employment is to instruct poor souls, and so they are like Stars shining in a dark winter-night; another while they are to converse in their courses, *Judg.* 5. 20. Now to enjoy and live under the Ministry of such Stars, and yet to walk in darkness, and to have fellowship with the works of darkness, to remain unconvinced, unconverted, unhumbed, unmortified, unfruitful, this is woful, this is a very lamentable state.

4. They are called the Lords Messengers and Ambassadors, *Mal* 2. 7. and the Ministers of the Gospel: for indeed the Ministers of the New Testament they are nowhere called Priests, they are called Ambassadors for Christ, *2 Cor.* 5. 20. Godly, faithful Ministers are the Lords Messengers and Ambassadors in matters concerning the Soul, the precious, immortal, never-dying soul

of man, not in the matters of this life, but for the soul. Now this is no mean employment to treat with God for the soul.

5. They are called the Lords Husbandmen. Gods Church is his husbandry, 1 Cor. 3. 9. and Ministers are Gods husbandmen: naturally we are like a barren wilderness; now the Lord sends his husbandmen to those barren wildernesses, to make it a fruitful Paradise: Now for Gods husbandmen to plow, sow, and harrow, and yet no fruit, no crop, *Isa. 5. 6.* when Gods Vineyard brought forth no fruit, *I will take away all their rainy clouds*, saith God; you shall have clouds, but you shall have clouds without rain; you shall have Ministers still, but such as shall never do your souls any good.

Well, you see the Titles given to them in Scripture: They are called the Salt of the Earth, and the Light of the World, and Stars, and the Lords Messengers and Embassadors, and Husbandmen; all which doth import a very great obligation lying on a people who live under such a Minister, and who live under and practice every commanded duty.

Inference 1. Dangerous and fearful is the estate of those who have enjoyed and lived under, and have not been wrought upon by such a Ministry: And this will appear, if we consider, 1. How fearful a sentence the Lord Jesus Christ hath given to those that live under, but despise and profit not by the Ministry of his faithful Servants, *Matth. 10. 14, 15.* And do not think that Christ said this touching the Ministry of the Apostles only: certainly the Lord Christ would have it to be understood of the Ministry of all his faithful servants, whom he sendeth to teach his people, *John 13. 20.* whomsoever he sends; and so, *He that despiseth whomsoever I send, despiseth me.* Then is the message of the Lords faithful mes-

messengers received aright, when people do not only hear it, but receive it, and bring forth fruit, as our blessed Lord speaks of good hearers, *Mark* 4. 20. Those are they that hear and receive the fruits sown in good ground; And thus our blessed Lord expounds himself, *Matth.* 11. 24. he telleth us there that they of *Caper-naum* shall be in a worse case then they of *Sodom* and *Gemorrhah*; and why? because they repented not at Christs Sermons and Miracles; they were not to be seen in their lives, notwithstanding Christs Ministry, notwithstanding Christs Preaching and his miracles among them, they did not amend their hearts and wayes: Oh how fearful a sentence hath our Lord Jesus Christ denounced against such!

2. If a people be not wrought upon by such a Ministry, what hope can such a people have that any thing shall do their souls any good? for is not the Ministry of Gods faithful Servants the power of God to Salvation, and the ministration of the Spirit? *2 Cor.* 3. 8. That is that Ministry whereby the Spirit of grace and holiness is infused into the hearts of the Fathers chosen ones in Christ Jesus. The Poet speaks of excellent Musicians, who by the power of their musick made stones to leap into a wall. A godly, faithful Ministry hath done more, it hath taken the stone out of mans heart, and hath given them new hearts: it hath made all the commandments of God easie to many a poor soul, because it loves its Father, its Redeemer and Comforter. There is a kind of obedience in a godly faithful Minister: and if this will not do, nothing will, as in *Luke* 16. 31.

3. Is not the cause of the non-proficiency of such a people under such a ministry in themselves? Oh men do hinder the fruit of the Word in their own souls, the powerful operation and working of the Word on their own souls! The Lord prophecies that sentence on the

Jews, *Matth.* 13. 14. he layes all the blame on themselves, and assigns their own sins as the reason and cause of it, as in *verse* 13. And thus our blessed Saviour expounds the parable of the Sower, shewing how many that hear the Word are never the better for it: and he layeth the blame on themselves, as in *Luke* 8. 14. What then? hast thou not profited under the ministry of the Lords faithful servants? Oh lay the blame on thy self.

4. Consider, hath not the Lord himself a hand in the proficiency or non-proficiency under such a ministry: surely the Lord hath a chief hand in making the ministry of his servants fruitful or not fruitful to them that enjoy it: Now to enjoy and not enjoy, is it not fearful sign that ye are not of God? as *John* 8. 47. is it not a sign that thou art not of Gods Elect, at least of Regeneration? But you will say, Did not the *Jews* hear Gods Word? Yes, they did with their bodily ears, but they heard it not with faith, submission, and fruitfulness, and therefore our blessed Saviour tells them, they were not of God, that is they were at least in an unregenerate, if not in a reprobate condition: And so *John* 10. 26. *Ye are those goats* (saith Christ) *that must stand at my left hand in that great day*; and then unbelievers shall reflect on themselves, not on Christs Ministry by the mouths of his Servants.

But if any should say, What then, will you say that all of us are reprobates that are not wrought on by your Ministry?

I say not so: for that seed which hath been sown on you, may do your souls good hereafter, though it hath done them little or no good as yet.

But secondly, this I may boldly say, That if any of you die in your present state, unconverted, unregenerate, you will carry with you to your grave as fearful marks of reprobation, as any we can find in the whole

Book of God. *John Baptist* compares the Ministry of the Gospel to a Fan, *Matth. 3. 12.* When the Lord Jesus maketh use of the ministry of his faithful servants among the people, when he maketh use of those fans, it will appear who among them are wheat, and shall be gathered into the Lords Garner; and who among them are chaff, and shall be cast into the fire. And now whether the present state that you have lived under, and are not yet wrought upon by a faithful Ministry, be not very dangerous, judge ye. And so much may suffice for the Doctrinal part.

If it be so then, *That a Ministers soundness of Doctrine, and holiness of life and conversation,* doth lay a great obligation on a people conscientiously and duly to practice every commanded duty; Then first of all, the first Use we shall make of this Doctrine shall be by way of Trial and Examination, and that in two particulars.

First, Whether you in this Parish, in this place, you here before the Lord do make conscience of the due practice of every commanded duty.

Secondly, Whether the Ministry you have enjoyed and lived under, doth not lay a great obligation on you so to do?

For the first of these, Whether you here before the Lord do make conscience of the due practice of every commanded duty in obedience to Almighty God: you may try your selves by these three excellent ingredients.

First, *Universality.* Canst thou in the witness of thy conscience say, that through grace thou dost every, as well as any part of the Lords revealed Will so far as thou knowest it?

2. *Uniformity;* Dost thou do all without prejudice or partiality?

3. *Ubiquity;* Art thou the same at home as abroad,

in

in thy closet as well as in the congregation? and dost thou mind inward and secret, as well as open and outward holiness? What saith conscience to this?

As first, Have commanded duties a Throne in your own souls and conscience? Secondly, Have they a throne in thy Family.

First, Have commanded duties a throne in your own souls and consciences? Is your hearts fully possess'd with the power of those divine and heavenly Truths, which you have often heard, which hath been again and again inculcated upon you as it was upon the *Thessalonians*, *1 Thess. 1. 5.* their carnal principles were confuted, their passion moderated, their lusts mortified, their self-ends confounded; are yours so? Have commanded duties a throne in your souls and consciences? Oh that all your consciences could give a satisfying answer to this Query.

Secondly, Have commanded duties a throne in your Families? do you make conscience of Family duties? are your houses *Bethels*, that is houses of God, houses of prayer, are they habitations of Holiness and Righteousness? do you make conscience of relative as well as of personal duties? Oh that all your consciences could give a satisfying answer to this Query!

But now the second Branch of this Use of Trial and Examination is this, Whether the Ministry you have enjoyed and lived under, doth not lay a very great obligation on you to put in execution every commanded duty? as *Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8.* that is, the Word of Faith we Preach; read that place: And may not we take up that with some variation, and say, You have heard of the disease, the misery and remedy; When the great God shall arraign thee at the great and fearful Day, and shall say thus, Thou rebellious wretch, why didst thou
not

not forsake thy evil wayes, thy drunkenness, thy rippling, thy covetousness, thy snuffing at purity, thy inveterate heat and spight against my holy wayes and Ministers? why didst thou not forsake thy evil wayes? wilt thou be able to say, Lord, I lived under 1. a soul-betraying, non-resident Minister, one that made it his business to fleece indeed, not to feed the flock; or 2. Under a soul-poysoning Innovator; or 3. Under a soul-pining dry-nurse; or 4. Under a soul-misguiding guide; or 5. Under a soul-unsetling temporizer; or 6. Under a soul-destroying discountenancer.

1. Canst thou say that thou livest under a soul-betraying, non-resident Minister, one that made it his business to fleece, and not to feed the flock, one that looked after the wool and fat of the flock; the fleece, but never minded the flock: but non-residency hath been hitherto decried, as that as breeds a Minister idle and erroneous, or licentious? but wilt thou be able to say, Lord, I lived under such a Minister, that was a soul-betraying Minister, one that was greedy of Livings, and had perhaps two, or three, or four, but so bad a man, that the worst was too good for him? or wilt thou be able to plead, or canst thou say,

2. Lord, I lived under a soul-poysoning Innovator, one that was for formality more then reality of true worship; one that preached such Doctrine as did not season, but poyson and destroy the souls of his hearers; such are Romish Teachers, Jesuits, Priests, and Seminaries, who so affect the outward pomp, as they neglect the inward power of it? Wilt thou be able to say, Lord, I lived under the Ministry of such a one, who was more zealous for the formality of thy worship, then the reality: more zealous for those things that will not endure the trial of the Lords day of appearance, then for the substance of Religion: Or

3. Canst

3. Canst thou plead that thou livedst under a soul-pining dry Nurse, one that did not, or could not feed us with the sincere milk of the Word, one from whom thou never heardst a soul-solid, a soul-working Sermon all thy life? I appeal to your Consciences: have you not heard often of your miseries, and Gods mercy, and Christs merits? Have you not heard often of the necessity of a holy life? Oh the convictions, informations, exhortations, perswasions, directions, you have enjoyed and lived under! Hath not thy state by nature been ripped up, and the Anatomy, (not of the Council of Trent) but of Gods Book, been shewed to thee? What shall I say? hath not Hell and Damnation to all rebellious, and Heaven and Salvation to all true penitent souls, been preached to you?

4. Or canst thou say that thou livedst under a soul-misguiding guide, as 1. A blind Seer, a blind Watchman, a blind Leader of the blind, one who knew not Heavens way? Canst thou say thou livedst under such a creature that is not to be found in Christs Catalogue, an Idol-preacher, as in *Psalms* 135. 15, 16, 17. verses, read that. Or 2. If not ignorant, yet one so vicious, that he pulled down more with his foul hands, then he built up with his fair tongue? Canst thou say thou livedst under one, who by his conversation gave his Doctrine the lye? Wilt thou be able to plead thus at the great day? or wilt thou be able to say,

5. That thou hast lived under a soul-unsettling Temporizer. What would he not do rather then he would lose his Living? which made me think Religion to be but a fancy. Wilt thou be able to say at the great Day, Lord, it was my sad lot and portion to live under the Ministry of such a one, who tuned his Fiddle to the times of every one? I, or lastly,

Wilt thou be able to say thou livedst under a soul-de-

destroying, dis-countenancer of all purity and holiness? one (perhaps) though no dunce, or drunkard, yet a profane scoffer, one that preached holiness out of his Pulpit, and Parish, and House, and the like.

But first of all, we can through grace appeal in this cause both to the Lord and to your selves, that it hath not been so with you.

2. Consider how unexcusable you will be, if you live and die in your ignorance, impenitency, and unbelief.

1. Consider, we can in this case appeal both to the Lord and to your selves. 1. To the Lord: we are able

with an humble boldness to appeal to him, and say, Lord, thou knowest we have given this people warning, *Exek.*

3. 18. Now blessed be the Lord, we can humbly appeal to his Majesty, Oh Lord, thou knowest we have warned the wicked to turn from his wicked way, and the profane from his profaness, and the superstitious from his superstition, and the schismatical from his schism, and the formal from his formality, and the civil honest man from resting in his morality. Oh blessed be thy name, we have endeavoured to take off this people from all their sandy, quagmoiry foundations! Lord, thou knowest our prayers for them. And so

2. To appeal to you: And this was a very great comfort to St. *Paul*, that he could appeal to the people themselves, as *Acts* 20. 26, 27. This was a great comfort to him; and blessed be the God of Grace, it is a great comfort to us, that we can take you to record, that we are pure from your blood; we have not ceased to declare all that the Father hath shewn to us; we have not been affrighted by any man, or mens frowns, nor debauched to conceal any part thereof by any mans smiles.

2. Consider how inexcusable you will be, if you live and die

die in your ignorance, impenitency, and unbelief, Ezek. 3. 10. Observe it, if you miscarry for Eternity, the blood of your souls will not be charged on us; nay, it will be on your own heads: And therefore the Apostle *Paul*, when he preached Christ to the *Jews*, and they opposed and blasphemed, their blood was upon their own heads, as *Acts* 18. 5, 6. Oh consider it! if your Ministers have been faithful, they are clear, and free, and guiltless; the Lord will never charge the blood of souls on them. Consider it therefore, how speechless will you be at the great day, if you live and die in your sins? may not the Lord say of this place, as he did of *Capernaum*? *Matth.* 11. 23. for thou hast enjoyed the Ministry of many of my servants: Dare any of you meet us in the day of judgement, under whose Ministry you have lived in an unregenerate estate, and say that you have lived under a soul-betraying, non-resident one; or under a soul-poysoning Innovator; or a soul-pining dry nurse; or a soul-misguiding guide; or a soul-unsettled Temporizer, or a soul-destroying discountenancer in an unregenerate estate? The Lord will then make you to know what it was to have a faithful Labourer among you, as *Ezek.* 33. 33. Then, when you shall be convinced in your own Consciences, you shall then say, you heard all those things, and we cannot say we were unwarned, either in sin or danger: we cannot say we were untaught our duty either to God or man: we had precept on precept, but we slighted all warning, and exhortation, and direction, therefore now are lost and undone everlastingly. So much may serve for the first Use.

The second Use is a use of Direction, which will fall into many very suitable and practical particulars, whereto I do beseech you to hearken unto, as the words of a dying man do commonly take the deepest impression

on the surviving hearers. Now this may be, for all that I know, my last words to you in this place: therefore I beseech you to hear me: An interruption, a suspension of my weak worthless pains and labour among you there will be, for any thing I know, from this day; but observe, it is no Resignation from me, or my Reverend Brother: and therefore what other dissolution of the property and relation between your Pastor and you, there may be, as of that mutual intercourse, I shall not account or call it a forfeiture of his place, whatever others may call it, let them call it what they will. Then hearken to my words, as the words of a dying man, yet not dead, but alive, and perhaps shall not die, but live and declare the Word of the Lord, and hold forth the Word of the Lord to you many a time in this place, when ever it pleaseth God to set open a door for me.

If it be so, *That the Ministers soundness in Doctrine, and holiness of Life and Conversation, do lay a great obligation on a people duely and conscienciously to practice every commanded duty:* Then from this Doctrine I would suggest and leave with you several words and hints of counsel: And oh that the Lord God of Heaven would effectually engrave and set them home on every one of your hearts!

My first Counsel is this, *That when the Lord taketh away such Ministers, whose Doctrine is sound, and their Lives exemplarily holy, you would then be duely apprehensive, and deeply sensible, both of the inflicting cause, and also of the meritorious deserving cause thereof.*

1. *For the inflicting cause;* and that is the Lord himself, Isa. 3. 1, 2. *Who is it that taketh away from a people the natural staff, the civil staff, and the spiritual staff?* saith the Prophet: *The Lord, the Lord of Hosts.* Who ever it be that is the instrument, it is certain it is the Lord himself that is the principal efficient cause of this
judge-

judgement on a people: and this will appear, if we consider,

1. The Lord hath threatned this judgement on a rebellious people, *Amos 8. 11, 12.* *I (saith the Lord) will bring this judgement on them.* A most dreadful spiritual judgement! Gods Word is the spiritual food of our spiritual lives: and therefore, as the granting of it is a blessing indeed, so the withholding of it is a judgement indeed. This direfull, dreadful judgement of the Lord, we see threatned; yea, that is not all, the Lord hath not only threatned it, but

2. Inflicted it. As the Lord hath taken away his faithful Messengers and Embassadors,

1. Sometimes by death, out of the world, out of the land of the living. And thus the Lord took away the Prophet *Enoch*, *Gen. 5. 24.* And

2. Sometimes by removal. Thus the Lord took away the Prophet *Jonas* from *Israel*, and sent him to *Ninive*, as *Jonah 1. 2.* And thus *Paul* and *Barnabas* went away from the *Jews*, and turned to the *Gentiles*, as *Acts 13. 4.*

3. Sometimes by deprivation. A time there was, when the good Priests and Levites were forced to flee their own places and possessions, *2 Chron. 11. 13, 14.*

4. Sometimes by Suspension. Thus a time there was, When it was said to the Seers, See not, and to the Prophets, Prophecie not, *Isa. 30. 9, 10.* Thus a time there was, when people would have Pastors, but would not endure faithful *Jeremiah*: and a time there was that that was a Law made, *Look ye speak no more in the name of Jesus*, *Acts 4. 18.* and a time there was, when *Paul*, and *Timotheus* and *Silvanus* were forbid to preach to the *Gentiles*, as *1 Thes. 2. 15, 16.* Thus we see the Lord himself hath inflicted this dreadful judgement on a people: and the

Lord

Lord hath divers wayes, and methods and means to inflict it.

3. Consider, *The Church and people of the Lord hath been very sensible of the Lords hand in this Judgement*, as we may see in *Psalm 74. 1. & 9. verses compared*. Why, what is the matter? as if they had said, God was wont heretofore to give us signs and tokens, he would even work miracles for us; the Lord would send us some Prophets to converse with, and instruct us; we had those that could tell us how long our troubles should last; but now we see no sign, the Lord leaveth us as it were to the wide world: and how sensible was the Lords Church in this judgement! as ver. 1. of that *Psalm*. This is the first endeavour, *We are to be duely sensible, and deeply apprehensive of the inflicting cause of such a Judgement; and that is the Lord himself.*

2. Of the meritorious Cause, and that is Sin? Say not we, It is long of such or such, but it is long of our selves: we may thank our selves for this, and we appeal to your selves whether this judgement may not be charged

1. From the general inflexibleness and untractableness of people under the Ministry of the Word: For this very cause the Lord plagued and poured his vengeance upon the Ten Tribes, as in *2 Kings 17. from ver. 13. to 19. The Lord testified against Israel by all the Prophets, and by all the Seers, saying, Turn you from your evil wayes; notwithstanding they would not hear.* And for this very cause did the Lord afterwards plague all *Judah*, as *Jerem. 29. 17, 18, 19.* And for this very reason did the Lord *Jesus Christ* remove *Paul* from *Jerusalem*, because the people were a stiff-necked people, and they would not receive *Pauls* testimony concerning *Jesus*, as *Act. 22. 18.*

Paul had a great desire to stay at *Jerusalem*, as appeared by his reasoning with the Lord, as *ver. 19, 20*. But what saith the Lord *Christ*? *ver. 21*. Now can *England*, can *London* plead Not guilty of this hainous provocation, a general unflexibleness, untractableness under a Conscience-ransacking, Conscience-searching Ministry? What shall the Lord do with such a people, under such a Ministry? Is it not just with God to let them alone that are profane and superstitious? let there be like People, like Priests: let the blind lead the blind, and let the wicked, rebellious Minister lead a wicked, loose people, that both may perish together everlastingly.

2. The unfruitfulness, formality, lukewarmness, declining of Gods own people: and for this the Lord threatens the Church of *Ephesus*, *Rev. 2. 4, 5*. *I have* (saith *Christ*) *somewhat against thee, thou hast left thy first love*; though not absolutely for nature, yet eminently for measure, And can *England*, can *London* plead Not guilty of this sad provocation? Now indeed we cannot but observe, and approve of your flocking to the Lords Ordinances, as Doves to the holes of a window; but did you do so some moneths ago? Oh your voluntary and fearful distractions, avocations, diversions from the worship and service of God! And is it not just with the Lord to take away that abundance, and choice of spiritual helps a people had, when they approved not of them, yea, when they undervalued, and despised, and abused them? Oh the Lord God help us all to affect our souls, and to lay our selves low before his all-seeing Majesty for our provoking him to do this! and endeavour to be duly apprehensive, and deeply sensible of the inflicting cause, and meritorious cause thereof.

2. *Take heed of a prophane delight in loose, lewd, wicked, dissolute Ministers.* And here we will premise two or three things.

1. *Too many people are too ready to cavil at many Ministers without a cause.* The life of our blessed Lord and Saviour, was it not traduced? did not some say that he was a friend to Publicans and sinners? We see Christ was cavilled at, and quarrelled with by some: And thus the holy Apostles, their lives were traduced, they went through evil report, as well as good report, 2 Cor. 10. 2. And thus *Atbanasius*, who was traduced for an Adulterer by the *Arians*; and so *Luther* and *Calvin* are represented and reported by the Papists, as if they had been the vilest creatures in the world: The wicked man cavils at, and finds spots, at least does what he can to find spots in the Sun; and some who are not so wicked, do look for an Evangelical perfection in Ministers, and all theirs, their wives, and their children, and their servants, and their company: How ready are people grossly and uncharitably to censure a Minister for any spot, yea, the least they discern in him, or his! and is this their vertue? nay, is it not their vice and corruption?

2. *It is no breach of the Churches peace, no argument of a contentious and unquiet Spirit in a Minister, to speak vilely of vile Ministers and enemies of the Churches peace.* Why, who are they? *John Baptist* tells us; he calls them vipers, a generation of vipers: why, were they not Preachers? *Mat. 3. 7.* and will you say that *John Baptist* was a man of a contentious spirit, of an unquiet spirit? And who are they whom our blessed Saviour calls a generation of vipers? as *Matth. 12. 34, 38, 39.* and who were they that our Saviour calls a generation of vipers, and an evil and adulterous generation? were they not Preachers? and

it is very observable, both *John Baptist*, and our Saviour did call those Preachers thus, even in the hearing of them who were their ordinary hearers; and do but observe what strange terms of disgrace *S. Peter* gives them, *2 Pet. 2. 12.* to certain Preachers in his time, *ver. 14.* what strange terms doth the Apostle give those Teachers, whose pernicious wayes many would follow, as in *ver. 2.* of that chapter! but did not the Scribes and Pharisees sit in *Moses* Chair? and did they not preach some good Doctrine, insomuch that *Jesus Christ* bids the people hear them, and observe what they said, though not what they did? as *Matth. 23. 1, 2, 3.* Therefore may some say, It seemeth strange that *Christ* should thus disgrace the Scribes and Pharisees: was not this the way to make their Ministry contemptible?

First, It is very clear and undeniable, that there were a generation of pitiful sorry Teachers, as in *Matth. 9. 36.* Why, did not the people enjoy the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees? yes, they did; but the Scribes and Pharisees were Idol Shepherds: they knew not how to feed their flock, and therefore *Christ* lookt on the people, as sheep scattered abroad for all the Scribes and Pharisees. They did no understand that there was heart murder, or heart-adultery, untill our blessed Saviour instructed them. The Scribes and Pharisees they did but strike at the bough only, but our Saviour preached with authority, and not as the Scribes did. And withal I answer

Secondly, That beyond all peradventure our blessed Saviour saw that although the Scribes and Pharisees did teach some truths, yet by their life and doctrine they did more mischief then good, and therefore the more credit they had among the people, the more mischief they were like to do; and there-

fore from hence our blessed Saviour calls them a generation of vipers. But I hope you will not count it an argument of the Churches peace, to speak vilely of a vile Ministry. It was no more then *John Baptist* did, and then our Saviour did.

Thirdly, No mans sin deserves so sharply to be re-proved as the sins of Ministers, because their sins of all others are chief sins committed in a land; at the Sanctuary prophaneſs too too often begins. Therefore when Gods people met in their publick faſts, made ſolema confeſſion of thoſe ſins of the firſt magnitude, by which they had moſt provoked the Lord, they do make confeſſion chiefly of the ſins of their Magiſtrates and Miniſters, *Neh. 9. 33, 34.* The *Jews* there bewailed the ſins of their Magiſtrates and Miniſters, as the particular cauſe of their plagues. Oh the ſins of Teachers are the teachers of ſin: and therefore no mans ſin deserves to be ſo ſharply re-proved, as the ſcandalous ſins of Miniſters. Now if you love your ſouls, take heed and beware of a profane delight in lewd, looſe, diſſolute Miniſters. We find the Lord complaining of the wickedneſs of the Prophets, and of the Priests and People, as *Jer. 5. ult.* the People did take a prophane delight in falſe Prophets, and in polluted Priests; and ſo likewise in the Prophet *Micah, ch. 2. v. 11.* the people, although they did oppoſe the Prophet *Micah* and other true Prophets, yet they did approve of, and delight in falſe Prophets, ſuch as were of their own leven, their own way and mould, ſuch as would flatter them and promiſe them wine and ſtrong drink: and are there not many ſuch people in the world, that had rather hear ſuch a Miniſter, than ſuch as preach cloſe-walking with God, and of getting to Heaven under pain of damnation? Will you cry up, and will you

profanely delight in a Ministry that shall preach Peace, Peace, to all profane rebellious people? in short such a one as will poyson you in his Doctrine, or in his example.

Thirdly, Take heed and beware of a sinfully idolizing of godly, faithfull, Ministers; the Apostle decries this with much zeal, ardency, and fervency of spirit; what is *Pauls* planting, and what is *Apolloes* watering? *1 Cor.* 3. 5, 6. as excellent gifts, parts and graces as these men had, yet they look higher: so it is your duty to look above mens parts, and above mens gifts and graces: *Paul* and *Apollo* cannot give increase; *Paul* indeed may plant, but there is no rooting indeed of these plants, but by Christ. And read *ver.* 7. it is God, and he only that can give increase: as *Elisha's* Servant could carry his Masters staff, and lay it on the dead child, but the child could not be raised to life, untill *Elisha* came himself: thus godly faithful Ministers can but lay Gods Message before you: but unless the Lord set it to the heart, never a dead soul can be raised from the death of sin, to the life of grace and holiness. Remember, godly and faithfull Ministers, although they have the Lords Sword, yet they have not the Lord Christs Arm: and alas what can the Lord Christs Sword do without his Arm?

Fourthly, Take heed of being leavened with prejudice against the Ministry of the Word, because of the misdemeanour or miscarriage of the Minister. Surely the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments doth not depend on the quality of the Minister. It is the Word of the Lord that converts, not the person of the Dispenser or Speaker. A seed that is sown in a good soyl, may, yea will grow and thrive, although perhaps the Sower had a very dirty hand; as

2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. the Apostle tells the *Corinthians*, that they are, saith he, *the Epistle of Christs Ministry by us*; the Hand is Christs, Ministers are but the Pen. Hence it was, that the Ministry of the Scribes and Pharisees was not to be rejected, but to be esteemed so long as they failed not in the substance thereof; and hence the Apostle rejoiceth that Christ was preached of the false Apostles, *Phil. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18.* though out of envy; take heed therefore and beware of a total separation from, dissenting of, and forsaking Church-assemblies: and yet I conceive it is a very rare thing for unconverted Ministers to convert some. For what saith the Lord by the Prophet *Zephania*, *Zeph. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.* *Oh saith the Lord to Jerusalem, that hath such Prophets and such Priests, wo to such a City, to such a Country to such a People;* and what saith Christ himself in *Matth. 15. 14.* *Let them alone*; oft times it falls out so: that it made Archbishop *Abbot* speak in a Lecture of his, and profess, that his heart did even bleed within him, to think of the precious souls of many people who had such Ministers, that if they had not been in the Ministry, they would not have been fit Hogherds for Swine. And yet we must remember not to tie the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments to the goodness or badness of a Ministers person.

Fifthly, Take heed and beware of being leavened with prejudice against all Ministers, because of the vileness and monster-like unbeseeming carriage of some Ministers. It hath been granted over and over and over, that some Ministers evill, licentious carriage and conversations are notorious; the Lord knows, too many Ministers have *Esaus* hands with *Jacobs* voice: what then, must this redound to the general disgrace of all Ministers? Because some professors

of the Law live lawless, must therefore all be censured and condemned for lawless livers? Because *Judas* was a Devil, and a son of perdition, will you therefore say that all the Disciples of Christ were naught? Perhaps you do know some *Sir Johns*, some blind Seers, some blind watchmen, who know not Heavens way, some blind droans: or secondly, some that carry themselves insolently, as *Jer.* 20. 1, 2. as *Pashur* did: or thirdly, some that are too too like that evil servant in the Gospel, as *Luke* 12. 45. or perhaps you know fourthly, some apostatizing *Demasses*, who embrace this present world, and revolt from their principles and profession, as *2 Tim.* 4. 10. Or perhaps you know, fifthly, some aspiring and climbing *Diotrephes*, as *John* 3. 9. perhaps you know some such as these as I have instanced, what then? is there any profession as it were, but it hath a certain skum? why then in the face of some, who thorow grace are free from these miscarriages, take heed and beware of being leavened with prejudice against all Ministers, because of the villainess and miscarriage of some.

Sixthly, Be earnest with the Lord for a godly, faithful Ministry, whose labour and pains among the people the Lord useth to bless. The Lord Jesus Christ is the great Patron of all Livings, as a Reverend man, now in Heaven, once said; He can present whom he will to a Parish, and he can restore whom he will to their people, as *Acts* 12. 5, 6, 7. as he did *Peter* out of prison by the peoples prayers; and thus when *Paul* was in prison at *Rome*, observe how he writes to *Philemon*, in *ver.* 22. of his Epistle; and thus when the Author of the *Hebrews* was restrained from preaching, observe what an Exhortation he useth, *Heb.* 13. 18, 19. Oh pray therefore, pray for
godly

godly faithfull Ministers, their pains, their labours, the Lord useth to bless among a people; as *Mat. 2. 6.* we read that the Lord bleisseth the labours of *Levi*, so that he was an Instrument in the Lords hand to turn wicked men from their iniquity; and *ver. 5.* so it was said of *Barnabas*, that by his Ministry much people were added to the Lord, *Acts 11. 24.* And if we would have godly faithfull Ministers, as we must pray for them, so we must first repent us of our sins, *Jer. 3. 14, 15.* repent we must of our sins, and particularly our contempt of the Ordinances and Worship of God. Secondly, We must prize the Gospell more than we have done; the Gospell loves to come and stay where it is welcome. Of all the seven Churches of *Asia*, the Church of *Philadelphia* was the best: that Church used the Word best, and that Church enjoyed the Word longest. Be earnest with the Lord for godly faithfull Ministers, whose pains and labours among the people the Lord useth to bless and prosper.

7. Be earnest with the Lord, that the refining Work of a Nationall Reformation, a City, a Country, a Family Reformation, a personall Reformation may begin at the refining and purging of Ministers. None will deny, but that there is great need of a Reformation; there is none of you but will confess, that the seed of leaven had need sometimes to be winnowed out from among us, as *2 Chron. 29. 48.* *Hezekiah* began at the Priests and Levites, *Hezekiah* began his reformation at them: and thus at our first reformation, the Protestants did then affirm, that there could never be any good Reformation, unless they began at the Court of *Rome*: and it is very observable, that when the Prophet speaks of the Lord Christs coming, as a refining fire, and as Fullers soap,

this

this also is prophesied, of refining the sons of *Levi*, *Mal. 2. 2.* when he shall purifie the sons of *Levi*; when he shall purge them as gold and silver; as it was in *Judah*, in that good Reign of that good King *Hezekiah*, *2 Chron. 29. 34.* the Priests were too few there; and as it was in *Judah* then, whether it be not so in *England* now, I affirm not, but leave you to judge. But a Ministers soundness in Doctrine and holiness of life and conversation, should lay a great obligation on a people, duly and conscientiously to practice every command to duty. And this may suffice for the second Doctrine. Come we now to the third Doctrine deducible to be handled from this Text; and that is this, *That in the due practice of commanded duties, Gods people may warrantably and confidently expect much of the gracious presence of the God of peace, even in the worst of times.* These things think on, saith the Apostle, *ver. 8.* these things do, saith the Apostle in the Text; and what then? *the God of peace shall be with you.* In the due practice of commanded duties, Gods people may confidently expect much of the gracious presence of the God of peace in the worst of times: Then take counsell from this Doctrine, that you may have the gracious presence of the God of peace with you; and if this Pulpit were my death-bed, I should give such counsells as these following to you.

First, Crown the Prince of peace, the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts and lives: I say, crown the Prince of peace, the Lord Jesus Christ, in your hearts and lives; receive him as your Lord and King, set a Crown on his head here in your hearts and lives, and he will crown you with peace in this life, and set a Crown of Glory, a Crown of Immortality on your heads in the life to come. If you have Christ, you have all things, all heavenly graces, all spirituall comforts,
all

all temporall blessings : if you have Christ, God will, God can then give you all things that are good for you ; without Christ, you are not, and you can do nothing that is acceptable with God.

Therefore this is my first Counsell to you, *Crown the Prince of peace, the Lord Jesus Christ, in your hearts and lives.*

Secondly, Then maintain a constant and conscientious intimate communion with the God of peace. It was good counsell which *Eliphaz* gave to *Job*, *Job* 22. 21. Would you have much of the preience of the God of peace ? Oh then frequently fall down and lye at the foot-stool of the Lords Throne, for grace, and for peace ; and when you do so, be not unmindfull of us, who have often been your mouths to God, and Gods mouth to you. And to engage and encourage you herein, consider,

First, The Lords Jesus Christ hath promised to be with his poor Ministers alwayes, even to the end of the world, *Matth.* 28. ult. If allways, not in the Pulpit only : no, the Lord hath promised to be with his faithfull servants out of the Pulpit as well as in the Pulpit : in the prison sealing the truth, as well as in the Pulpit preaching the truth : Oh then, will you put this in suit by prayer, That the Lord Christ will be with his poor Ministers to the end of the world ? 2. *We shall not fail to pray for you*, 1 Sam. 12. 23. Our sequestering from our preaching-work from you, will give us advantage to lay out more time to fetch sighs from our hearts in praying-work for you : and I trust the Lord will give us hearts, so to improve our time for you, as *Samuel* said : so God forbid we should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you, as *Peter* did to the people with a promise, as 1 Pet. 5. 10. and not only for you : but

Secondly,

Secondly, Even for such as have treated us somewhat uncivilly and unkindly, to say no more of them, although the number of them are very inconsiderable : but for such, I trust we shall not forget in our prayers : as *Moses* fell down on his face for the children of *Israel*, when they treated him very unkindly, and spit in his face ; I trust we shall not forget *Moses's* prayer for the people : And so, when they danced before their Idol. *Jeremiah* wept for those in his time, as *Jerem.* 13. 17. And that we shall not forget *Jeremiah*, weeping for you : And I trust likewise, that we shall remember *Stephen*, being on his knees for his persecutors, pouring out his life and prayer together, *Act.* 7. 60. I doubt not but my Reverend Brother, and my self, shall remember *Pauls* willingness, to spend, and to be spent both in prayer and preaching for you all. Though the more abundantly he loved, the less he was beloved, *2 Cor.* 12. 15.

Thirdly. Maintain and nourish all tenderness in your Conscience all your dayes : Oh go not without, much less against the dictates of Conscience ! rebell not against the light of it : beware of stifling and suppressing a warning conscience, lest a warning conscience prove a gnawing conscience, and prove a tormenting conscience : And consider, First, Remorse of conscience hath an eye against all sin past. Secondly, Tenderness of conscience, which hath an eye to all sin to come. Take heed then of all calmness of heart.

Fourthly, Take heed of Apostatizing. *Chrysostome* hath a notable saying, namely, *That Ministers have a greater trouble, because they never find their work as they leave it, as other workmen do.* Oh in how short a time doth a poor Minister find all his work put

put out of frame and order ! Did not *Moses* find it so ? *Exod.* 32. 8. *Moses* had no sooner turned his back as it were, but the people were turned out of Gods way of worship, And did not *Paul* find it so ? *Gal.* 1. 6. The *Galatians* were quickly removed : *Paul* was but lately gone from them, and they were quickly apostatized. Now this commeth to pass.

First, It is by Reason of a crafty, subtil, deceitfull Devil : As in the Gospell we read, *While men slept, the Enemy came and sowed tares*, *Matth.* 13. 25. And who this Enemy is, we may see in Christs expounding the Parable, ver. 39.

And secondly, Partly by Reason of mens own deceitfull hearts, as *Heb.* 3. 12. observe it. There is an evil heart of unbelief, in the best ; it dwels in the best, but it reigns in the wicked ; And what is that ? one of these evil hearts of unbelief, in apostatizing, in departing from the living God.

Thirdly, It is partly by Reason of deceitfull workers, as the Apostle calls false Apostles. Is it partly by reason of such ? Then take heed of apostatizing, either from truth of Doctrine, purity of Worship, or practice of Conversation.

1. From truth of Doctrine. Be not weary of old truths ; take heed, and beware of itching after novell Doctrines ; take heed and beware of admiring this or that opinion, which, as new lights, drop down from Heaven, but indeed is but the smoak of the bottomless pit.

2. From purity of Worship also. Let not your zeal be cold, but kindled against every bracelet of the Scarlet whore. How often doth the Apostle call the people adulterers and adulteresses, because they apostatize from the Word and Worship of God !

3. In

3. In Practice and Conversation. Prize the Gospel, love it, and live accordingly to it ; With constancy look on every motion of thy soul, and every action of thy life, as a step to life, or a step to death ; as a step towards Heaven, or a step to Hell, *Heb. 10. 38.* To close this Counsell, the Author of the *Hebrews* bringeth in the Lord, protesting against Apostatizing; If any man draw back from Gospel-principles, and Gospel-worship, or from a Gospel-conversation, saith the Lord, *If any man draw back thou, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Tremble then at this, thou Apostatizer, whoever thou art, wherever thou sittest or standest, *My Soul shall have no pleasure in thee.* I loath and abominate that person, saith the Lord.

5. All of you then study peace, and particularly you who do unfeignedly set your hearts and faces towards Heaven, study peace, and follow after it ; though it run from you, pursue after it. You profess your selves to be them that are truly fearing God, and truly honouring the King, and truly loving one another, Oh then seek peace.

You who do unfeignedly set your hearts and faces towards Heaven, study peace alway, and decline all dividing principles and practices among you, and that you may not either breed or feed circumstantiall differences, or substantiall divisions, consider, God is the God of Peace ; our Saviour is the Prince of Peace ; our Comforter is the Comforter of Peace ; our Calling is the Calling of Peace ; our Way is the Way of Peace. Oh that we may so live in Peace, that the God of Love and Peace may dwell with us ; and that the God of Peace may live with us here, that we may live with the God of Peace hereafter !



Mr. Bull of Newington-
Green his Farewell Ser-
mon.

John 14. 16.

*And I will send the Father, and he shall give
you another Comforter, that he may abide with
you for ever.*



THE Observation that I commended
to you out of these words, was
this,

*It is the great work for which the
Spirit of Christ is given by God, to
comfort the hearts of his people.*

You may remember that I have formerly opened
the truth to you, and have shewed you what this
Spirituall comfort is, that the Spirit of Christ works
in the hearts of his Disciples. I gave it you in this
Description.

It is that inward, spirituall satisfaction, that the heart of a gracious person finds in, and through Jesus Christ, in all the various dispensations of God towards him, whereby he is enabled to go on in cheerfulness in the way that God would have him, whether it be by a way of doing or of suffering. And herein I shewed,

1. The nature of the spiritual satisfaction.
2. The Author of it, It is God by his Spirit.
3. The Object of it, God through Jesus Christ.
4. The proper Subject of this inward spirituall comfort, the people of God.
5. And lastly, The Effects of the spirituall comfort; it is to strengthen the heart, both to do and suffer.

I came the last time, to shew you how the Spirit of God doth this.

1. He doth it as an enlightning Spirit, by shewing where comfort is to be had, by opening the eyes of understanding, as he did *Hagars* bodily eyes to see the well of water.
2. He doth it as a quickning Spirit, bringing the soul into that capacity to take in the comfort; for what comfort can a dead man receive? a Cordiall and a puddle is all one to a dead man.
3. He works this inward spirituall satisfaction, by discovering the truth of this vitall Principle in the Soul; for a man may have a principle of Grace and spirituall Life in him, and not know it, that though he has the spiritual comfort, yet it is all one as if he had it not.

Now this is the great Question that is debated in the heart of a Child of God, Whether he be regenerated and born again? whether he hath grace in his soul, that grace that will qualifie him for glory?
and

and if he was satisfied as to this, he would not be a moment without comfort: but he is afraid that he is dead in sin, that he is a stranger to the life of grace; hence ariseth all his spirituall trouble; now the Spirit of God comes in, and resolves the case, comes into the soul by his bright Reflections, and fills our souls with comfort: Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God.

4. The Spirit of God is a comforting Spirit, as he openeth the vein of godly sorrow in the soul: Truly this is the next way to spirituall comfort, when a man can once spiritually mourn for sin. *Matth. 5. 4. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.* Godly sorrow opens the vein, and lets out the matter that hinders comfort, and causeth inward trouble in the soul: A gracious man takes a great delight in godly sorrow; oh! its matter of marvellous comfort to a child of God, when he can kindly mourn for his sins.

5. The Spirit of God comforts the soul as he is a mortifying Spirit. Thus he takes away that that is the ground and matter of Believers trouble, mortifying that sin that is the cause of his sorrow; pride, unbelief, inordinate love to the world.

6. The Spirit of God works comfort in the hearts of his people, by setting their own spirit to seek for comfort in Gods own wayes.

The last thing I did for the Explication of the Doctrine, was to add some Propositions,, and they were such as these.

1. *Many a gracious heart that hath fellowship with the Spirit of God in his sanctifying work, may feel and find none in his comforting work.* The Sun may operate where it doth not shine: A man may be in a

state of salvation, when he doth not feel the joyes of salvation, *Isa. 51. 3.* You shall find those that feared the Lord, and had the comforts of the Holy Ghost, yet walked in darkness.

2. *Even those gracious souls, that have the fellowship of the comforting Spirit to day may want it to morrow.* This is not dayly bread, while the Saints are on this side Heaven. The Solstice of a Christians comfort doth not last all the day long; they are not feasted with this every day; they have the night as well as the day; there is a night as well as a day in the heart of a gracious soul; as it is naturall in the common course of nature, the Sun may shine to day, but it may be clouded to morrow. Thus it was with that holy man, *Psalme 30. 7.* *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.* And God doth this in infinite wisdom, to put a difference between Earth and Heaven, this valley of tears, and that state of glory, that so the hearts of Gods people may be kept in a frame of longing after the state of Heaven: God will have his people be groaning here, that his people may groan after that condition when all sorrowing and sighing shall flee away. God reserves perfect comfort to be the reward of perfect holiness: while our graces are imperfect, we must make account that our comfort will be so too: Tears will be never wiped from our eyes, till sin be quite taken out of our hearts.

3. *Those that have had this spirituall comfort in their souls, they may lose not only the impression of the Spirits comfort, but they may feel the impression of Gods anger.* Heman complains, that the wrath of God did hang upon him, and that the terrors of God had cut him off. A gracious heart hath real grounds
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of consolation, though he hath not present sensible comforts.

A child of God hath alwayes that, that if he did see, he could not be without comfort; the Promises are his support, he hath the first fruits of the Spirit, and right to eternall life; A child of God shall alwayes have so much to keep up his hopes and affiance upon God; a child of God, in the darkest condition, though he doth not see enough to make him rejoyce in God, yet he sees enough to make him trust in God: though he walk in darkness, and see no light, yet he trusts in God. *Job sayes, Though the Lord slay him, yet he would trust in him. David was in great trouble, while he was in that disquiet expostulation, Why art thou cast down O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me! trust in God.*

3. *Those that have inward comforts from the Spirit, may at the same time have little comfort from Gods outward dispensations.* It may be dark without, when its light within; while Stephen sees nothing but blood here below, he saw Heaven above: And Christ tells his Disciples, *In the world they should have tribulation, but in him they should have peace.*

6. And lastly, *Though this be one great work of the Spirit of God to comfort the hearts of Christs Disciples, yet there are some speciall seasons wherein the Spirit of God gives out this comfort.* There are seasons of sadness, there is a season of heaviness, and there is need of it; *There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourne, and a time to dance.* I shewed you some of the Seasons.

1. One speciall season of the Spirits comforting the renewed soul, is presently upon the souls first salvation. After the Spirit is become a Spirit of Adoption, presently it becomes a Spirit of Consola-

tion; after the Spirit hath come into the soul in the Law, it then nextly appears a Spirit in the Gospel.

2. Another Season when the Spirit gives out this comfort, is just before the Lord layes upon his people any great affliction. When was it that Christ was transfigured, and his face did shine as the Sun? it was immediately before his bloody passion. Christ was first taken into the Mount, before he was lifted up upon the Cross. When was the voice heard, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, but just before he was led into the wilderness to be tempted. When was *Paul* lifted up into Heaven? it was immediately before Satan was sent to buffet him. Thus God gives his people something before-hand to support their spirits, that they may not faint; the Disciples were full of comfort, *Act. 5. 41*. And when was this? immediately just before they were carried before the Council, and whipt up and down like Vagabonds and Rogues, for preaching the Gospel.

3. Another Season when the Spirit gives out this Comfort, is in the time of Suffering. God comes in the nick of time, especially if a man suffer for righteousness sake; if his suffering be upon the account of Christ, he seldome fails to send the Comforter for the relieving of his spirit, *1 Pet. 4. 13*. *But rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

Bodily confinement, and inward streights, are the time of the Souls greatest enlargement. *John* had his Vision in the Isle of *Patmos*. When a child of God is brought to a piece of bread, then is the season for God to feed him with heavenly Manna;
Jacob

Jacob had glorious Visions, while he was flying from the wrath of his Brother, when he had nothing but a heap of stones for his pillow. It was in the wilderness that God speaks to his Church thus. I told you of Mr. *Glover*, a prisoner, who found no comfort in the time of his imprisonment, but when he was going to the stake, he cryed out, *He is come, he is come*, meaning the Spirit, the Comforter.

4. Another Season of Comfort is, after some speciall exercise of Grace, godly sorrow for sin, fresh actings in the pardon of sin, and new Engagements, and Resolutions, and Promises of more close walking with God, after declining from him.

5. Another Season of Comfort is, After some great Trials and Afflictions. Light is then most pleasant, when we newly are come out of a dark place; after Thunder, comes Lightning; after a storm, comes a calm: God led his people first into the wilderness, and then into the Land of *Canaan*: It is often so in Gods Dispensations towards his people, their greatest Afflictions go before their greatest Deliverances: And therefore let not the Saints of God despair when they are at the lowest: when they walk in darkness, and see no light, yet let them trust in the Lord.

6. Another Season of Comfort is, When men are conscientiously diligent in their particular Callings, then they walk with God. To this I gave you an instance in the Shepherds, they were faithfull and diligent in their callings, they were watching over their flocks by night, and then the Angel comes, and tells them, *To you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*, Luk. 2. 11.

A company of poor Shepherds, keeping of their sheep, God appears unto them, and manifesteth his comforting presence, when the Scribes and Pharisees, notwithstanding all their long Prayers, and their strict Rites and Ceremonies, hear not a word of him.

7. Another Season of Comfort is, When we are either preparing for, or in the spirituall act of some duty. When grace is exercised to prepare the heart to pray, and in attendance upon such an Ordinance, then oftentimes the Spirit of God is with them, to let poor souls in their endeavours find acceptance with God. *Hannah* had been praying to God, but what melody did she find in her heart ! When *Mary* sat at Christs feet, how doth Christ fill her heart with comfort, sealing up her Salvation to her ! I now come to close with some Application.

Use. *If it be the work of the Spirit of God to comfort the hearts of Christs Disciples*, then by way of information I gather this, *That a poor soul is very hardly settled and satisfied in point of Comfort.* Sure it is a hard matter to comfort a poor soul, when one of the Persons of the blessed Trinity must be employed on purpose to do it. This is an Office belonging to the Holy Ghost, when he is to be the *Paraclete*, the comfort of the Holy Ghost. This sure is a hard matter, to comfort the wounded spirit, when the soul is full of the spirit of bondage. Oh ! the hesitations, the jealousies, the doubts and fears, the objections that a poor soul makes against his spirituall peace and comfort ! Now it begins to take comfort, then it doubts again ; now he believeth, and takes courage, but anon he is afraid ; there is a great deal ado to fasten comfort upon a poor soul, 2 *Cor.* 1. 21, 22.
What

What a heap of words are there together! and it is all little enough to comfort a poor soul, *Now he that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, and hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* It is not without much tugging and drawing that the soul is first brought to believe, and then, when it doth believe, it is a hard thing to perswade it that it doth believe; There is a strange kind of squeamishness upon the heart; he thinks that there is no comfort to be taken that doth belong to him. *Luther sayes, It is a harder thing to comfort a troubled Conscience, then to raise the dead.* Surely it must be as hard, when nothing but the same power must do it.

The Soul is hardly convinced, but all the glad tidings of the Gospell are gilded streams, and all the Promises are but pleasant Fancies, without any Reality: but that these things should belong to him, this he cannot believe, for want of Faith: So that the Spirit of God is fain to come in, and end the controversy, before the soul will be satisfied.

2. If it be the work of the Spirit of God, to comfort the hearts of his people; then all the comfort of Christless and graceless souls is nothing worth, there is no true peace; for they are not the Disciples of Christ, which are the proper subjects of this comfort; they will not hearken to Christ, nor learn of Christ, but they *cast his words behind their back, and break his bands asunder.*

Those that do not learn Christs Precepts, and follow Christs Canons, and obey Christs Commands, they are none of Christs Disciples, and to be sure, they have not the spirit of Christ which is the Efficient in this comfort, and without the root there cannot be the fruit; for this inward peace is the fruit of

the Spirit. And therefore what comfort they have, it is either a sinfull comfort, which to be sure will end in sorrow, or else at best, it is but a carnall comfort, which will soon vanish like the crakling of thorns under a pot; *There is no peace*, saith God, *to the wicked*; there is no peace with God as long as you are at peace with sin.

3. Here they are stumbled with the riddle, that the people of God should be sorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing; *as sorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing*; the carnall world think this to be a contradiction, though they be troubled without, yet they have peace within; though they have matter of sorrow in respect of outward affliction, yet they have fellowship with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, which gives peace in affliction, joy in sorrow, light in darkness, which fills them with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Secondly, If the Holy Ghost be the only Comforter of the hearts of Gods people; then let me exhort every one of you to labour for an interest in this Comforter. Friends, I beseech you be restless till you have got some evidence of the Comforter in your souls by the inhabitation of the Spirit in your hearts; without you have an interest in Christ, there is no comfort, no true comfort to be expected; no comfort in prosperity, no comfort in adversity, no comfort in life, nor in death, no peace with your consciences. Men may make a shift to keep themselves at quiet for the present, by lulling conscience, they may have a kind of peace from a false principle; Ah but what will you do when storms arise? what will you do when death and affliction comes! *Jonas* lay quietly asleep till the storm came; O my Friends, we must shortly lie a dying, the Lord knows how soon; O what will you do for comfort in a dying hour? all other

other comforts may forsake you, and before that time you may meet with sorrow and heavy afflictions, so that all your friends in the world will not do you good: your friends may fail, your hearts may fail, and then no comfort but the comfort of the Holy Ghost will do you good; the time may come, that all your friends may prove miserable comforters, when God comes to deal with the soul, to set sin home upon the conscience, to lay sin before us; then what will you do? We are all guilty of sins of omission & sins of commission: when these come to be charged upon the soul, what will you then do? then no plaister of comfort will stick, but those of the Spirits laying on: unless the Spirit seal up the pardon of sin, the love of God to the soul, nothing will quiet and comfort the soul: however men may be merry for a time, yet there is a time of sorrow that will come, when they shall reflect upon their ways, when they shall see nothing but sin behind them, and terrors before them: Oh! what amazement will seize upon their souls! they have no interest in God, in Christ, they have no interest in the Promises: there is nothing that will comfort you, unless you have a interest in the Spirit.

But then, what shall I do, that I may get this comforting Spirit into my Soul?

First, *Thirst earnestly after it.* The promise is made to those that thirst after it, *Isa. 44. 3.* Thirst after him in his convincings, in his humblings, in his sanctifying mercy: Oh let the desire and longing of thy soul run out this way! no matter for an Estate, no matter for Friends and outward comforts; if thou hast the Spirit of God, thou hast that that is paramount to all outward comforts.

Secondly, *Pray earnestly for the Spirit.* You are not so willing to give your children what they want,

as God is to give his Spirit to them that ask it. Cry mightily, *Lord, give me thy Spirit*; and cry to the Spirit, and say, as *Laban to Abicam, Come in*, so pray the Spirit to come in to thy Soul.

Thirdly, If you would have this Comforter to come and abide with you, *You must resolve to become Christs Disciple*. It is only for such that Christ prays that God would send the Comforter: You must hearken and obey him, and follow him where-soever he goeth. You know the terms upon which you must be Christs Disciple, *Matth. 16. 24. He must deny himself, and take up his Cross, and daily follow Christ. He must deny himself*. There is two selfs in a man, nay, three selfs, and they must be denied: but however the first two must be denied, if you intend to be Christs Disciple.

1. *A mans righteous self*. If any thing that we are, that we have, or can do, from our works or duties, any thing of our own, all must be denied in point of Justification.

2. *Sinful self*. A mans corruptions must be denied, pride, passion, and love to the world.

3. *Natural self*. Friends, estates, relations, credit, and honour, and outward comforts, these may be denied, you may be called to part with them; but if they come in competition with Christ, they must be denied.

2. You must take up the cross of Christ, rather then forsake his honour, or disobey his commands. You must resolve to follow Christ where-soever he shall lead you, either in a way of active or passive obedience; you must take up Christs load, you must undergo his burden.

Now Christians, are you resolved upon this? now sit down and consider what it will cost you to be
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Christians: and if you would have the best, you must be contented with the worst; and if you are resolved upon this, then you are the true disciples of Christ, and you are under the promise of his comfort, and *Christ is praying the Father to send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you for ever.*

2. Use. Is of Exhortation, wherein I shall apply my self to the true disciples of Christ, those that have had communion with Christ in his sanctifying presence; labour after communion with him in his comforting presence. To all others, that are without the Spirit of God, I may say, as *Ischu* to *Ischeram*, *What hast thou to do with these things?*

Labour to be convinced of the need and want of Christ; but such as have been partakers of the Spirit of Christ as a sanctifying Spirit, labour after communion with him as a comforting Spirit; and to this end I shall stir you up to this,

1. By way of Motive.

2. By way of Comfort.

First, By way Motive. Though you have some comfort, it is but little in comparison of what you may have, and in comparison of what you may stand in need of; though a Saint would not change the saddest hour of his life for the sweetest hour in his former condition. If the Saints of God did enjoy the comforts that they might, oh what blessed lives might they live! but they are so full of trouble, as if there were no Holy Ghost the Comforter. The people of God are oftentimes troubled without a cause, as that holy man, *Why art thou cast down oh my soul?* He could not render a true account of his trouble; he was sad, but he could not tell why or wherefore.

2. When there is cause, they are apt to be troubled without measure. In those cases, where it is a sin

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not to be troubled at all, the people of God are apt to be troubled overmuch, as the *Israelites* in their bondage in *Egypt*. It were a sin for them not to be troubled; but they were so full of troubles, that they could not hearken to *Moses* and *Aaron*. And so the Disciples in the Text, it were a sin for them not to be troubled for the absence of Christs body; but so to be troubled, as if God could not comfort them without him, this was their weakness: And to come to our case, it were a sin to slight this Dispensation of God that is coming upon us, if we should not be troubled for the loss of the Ministers of Jesus Christ; but to mourn before God under the sense of this Dispensation, to mourn so much, as to think that when these are gone, all is gone, to be so much troubled, as not to hearken to the words of the Text, *That we may have a Comforter*! I remember an admirable expression of a child to his Mother, when his Father was dead, to shew, *That out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God can manifest his praise*: Why Mother (sayes the Child) *though my Father be dead, yet God is alive*. May not I say so to you, Though your Ministers be as it were naturally dead, yet is not God alive? is not the Spirit of God alive? Though you have some comfort, yet you have little in comparison of what you may have, if you seek for it.

2. Study the excellent nature of the comfort, how little soever a man hath of this spiritual comfort; it will sweeten his condition, be it what it will be. When a man hath communion with the Spirit of God, he hath comfort in all conditions; then, though a mans condition be never so bad, yet it is very good, *Hab. 3. 17*. *Though the Fig-tree shall not blossom, though the fruit be not in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall cease,*
and

and the fields shall yield no meat: the flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. He can fetch Hope, and ground his Faith upon the Promises, though the Providences and Dispensations of God be never so mysterious; the comfort of the Spirit doth make up the want of all other comforts: The comforts of Ordinances are sweet comforts, Sermon-comforts are sweet comforts, Sacrament-comforts are sweet comforts: Ah, but the comfort of the Spirit can supply the want of all these! all outward crosses cannot hinder these inward comforts; a man that hath these comforts, may have a Feast with bread and water; a little of this comfort is able to sweeten a whole Ocean of sorrow: *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul*, Psalm 94. 10. So that when the hearts of Gods people are filled with sad thoughts, what will become of themselves, what will become of their Families, what will become of the Church of God, what will become of the Ministry of the Gospel, and of the Ordinances of Christ, they are full of sad fears and distracting thoughts; when they have a multitude of thoughts, in the midst of all, these spiritual comforts can comfort and refresh the Soul: Oh labour after a greater share of this comfort.

God hath cast us upon sad times, wherein we shall have need of more then ordinary comfort: We are like to have troubles without, if we have not peace within, it will be very sad: we are like to lose much of Christs bodily presence, I mean in his Ordinances; how many of those Messengers that represent the person of Christ, and stand in his stead! if
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we should not enjoy the other Comforter, our estate would be doleful; if we have darkness without, and darkness within, how sad will that darkness be!

3. Labour to get more communion from the Spirit of God. This will raise and sublimate your natural comforts, and turn them into spiritual comforts. A man never relisheth these outward comforts, till he come to taste the ravishment and sweetness of the Holy Ghost, till he taste the love of God; these give them a higher lustre then the men of the world; though they enjoy much comfort, yet they do not enjoy half that a child of God doth; the little that the righteous hath, is better then the great revenues of the wicked; to a child of God a dinner of green herbs is more savoury and pleasant to him then the stalled Ox, because a child of God hath better sauce with it.

Worldly men they smell to their flowers, it is the only godly man that sucks out the hony; that all things are given to him in love, out of this he sucks comfort: A gracious heart sees all these outward comforts, that they are purchased with the blood of Christ, and therefore these should do him good, and he may take comfort that he hopes for what he hath not, as well as for what he may have; and he may take comfort in his condition, be it what it will, he sees all is for his good; such a one believeth what he readeth not: So he believeth Gods wayes are wayes of Truth, though some more sweet, and some more bitter.

4. Labour after communion with the Spirit in his comforting work, is another. This is the best preservative against all intanglements of sin whatsoever; It is a great hour of temptation, and if our comforts do not lie above the world, we shall be great-

ly ensnared by the world. If a man eat sweet meats, he cannot relish ordinary food; so while these sweet comforts lie upon the soul, he cannot relish these ordinary things in the world: What, do you tempt me with these things, sayes a child of God? what are these to the comforts of the Holy Ghost? The heart of man will seek comfort one way or another; and if he hath it not from the Spirit of God, he will seek it some other way; if he hath not comfort from the Spirit of God, he will seek some sparks of his own kindling; rather than they will sit in darkness without comfort, they will light their candle at the Devils fire: And as he delivereth from temptation on the right, so he delivereth from temptation on the left hand; he that is filled with the comforts of the Holy Ghost, what are sufferings to such a man? he hath that within him that will carry him through all danger; here is that comfort, and that life by Christ, which may ease us in our greatest crosses; this will make a child of God speak of the sufferings of this world as a light matter. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, because in Heaven they had a better and more enduring substance, *Heb. 11. 35*. Some were tortured, receiving no deliverance, because in Heaven they had a better substance. Oh, if you would be kept from the snares of the world, let your comforts be above the power and danger of temptation from any thing here below.

3. By way of Direction. How shall we have communion, and act faith upon the Holy Ghost as our Comforter? The Holy Ghost is designed and appointed by God the Father to this Office: Now you know
none

none love to be slighted in their Office: and if we do not act faith upon the Holy Ghost, we slight his Office; therefore we should have recourse to him in a way of believing: As we should act faith upon Christ for the pardon of sin, so we should act faith upon the Holy Ghost, for a sense of that pardon.

2. Go often to Jesus Christ, and beg him, and beseech him to intreat the Father for you. Go to God the Father in the name of Christ, and beg it upon the account of Christs prayer and intercession, that he would send the Comforter; and you have good argument to inforce the Petition, the very same as the Disciples, *That Christ would*, when he went away, *pray the Father, and he should send you another Comforter*. Christ tells them, that some there were that would kill them, and in so doing, think they did God good service; therefore Christ, in compassion to them, in the state that he left them in, *prays the Father that he would send the Comforter*. So now we must go to God; those Ministers that were wont to comfort us, are now to be taken from us; our *Barnabas's*, sons of consolation, their mouths are to be stopped: though Ordinances are now to be dammed up, the houses of God made places of defilement, our Teachers are removed into corners, our Troubles increase, and we have none to tell us how long; the light of our eyes, the comfort of our hearts, in respect of outward means, are going from us; whither shall we go? we want bread for our souls, we want cordials for our hearts: Blessed Saviour pittie us! and since thou wilt not come to us in thy own presence, as thy Embassadors, come to us by thy Spirit, do now in Heaven as thou didst on earth, *Pray the Father for us*: do not leave us as so many Orphans, without Father or Mother, but send thy

thy Spirit to refresh our souls : See how we are hated and reviled, and we must suffer these things ; now, *Let us have thy Spirit.*

3. If you would have communion with the Spirit of Christ in his comforting work, *Take heed that you do not lay up your comforts in the creature.* This is for to seek for the living among the dead ; those that rejoyce in the creature, rejoyce in a thing of nought ; and you that have an interest in God, God will not take it at your hands, to seek it anywhere else, no, not in Ordinances ; though God would have you to seek comfort in Ordinances, yet he would not have you to seek comfort from Ordinances.

4. Set down, and be much in duty, *Psalm 63:5. 6. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches.* If you look at the beginning of the *Psalm*, you shall find that this *Psalm* was penned when *David* was deprived of the Ordinances of God. Many a man complains that he lives uncomfortably ; no wonder, when he little thinks on Christ.

5. Be much in the exercise of grace. *Then they walked in the fear of the Lord, when they walked in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.*

6. Take heed of quenching and grieving the Spirit, your Comforter, by neglecting his motions, or by acting any thing against the mind of the Spirit : Do not sin against him as your enlightning Spirit : that will hinder him as your Comforter.

I close with a word of Comfort to the people of God. If it be one of the great works of the Spirit of God, here is matter of great comfort to those that stick close to Jesus Christ.

1. Sure your comforts will be satisfying comforts,

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sufficient, because they are comforts of the Spirits working. The Lord Jesus hath promised to make up the want of his bodily presence, by sending his Spirit: He was now going from them, and tells them, *That he could not stay*; and this was sad news to the Disciples, who were ready to break their hearts; and the best comfort that he could afford them, was to tell them, *That he would send the Comforter*. If Christ can comfort his people in the absence of himself, surely he can comfort them in the want of all other comforts that relate either to soul or body; and so in the want of mercies, in the want of outward Ordinances, he can comfort the soul. It is the Spirit of God that can comfort in the use of these: and if he will, he can do it in the want of them: he can comfort us in the wilderness, where no water is: when he doth deny the means, he can comfort us without: where he denyes us the stream, he can make us drink out at the Fountain.

7. And Lastly, The people of God find hereby, that their comforts are abiding. Your liberty, your friends: Ah, Ordinances and Ministers may be taken from you: your Ministers may be banished, your Ministers may be imprisoned, but here is a *Comforter that abides for ever*. And though they may keep your Ministers out of the Pulpit, yet they shall not take the Comforter out of your hearts: So that when I shall not Preach any more to you, I shall pray the Father, *that he would send you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*.

Mr.

Mr. Bull of *Newington-Green*, his Farewell Sermon
in the Afternoon.

Acts 20. 32.

And now Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his Grace, who is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.



He words are part of *St. Pauls* Farewell Sermon, or Discourse to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus*, one of those famous seven Churches of *Asia*, that we read of in the Book of the *Revelations*. It is not to be doubted, as *Calvin* doth Comment upon the place, that though the Apostle speaks immediately to the Elders, yet doth comprehend the whole Church in the Speech.

Our holy Apostle had been a long time with the Church preaching among them, taking pains with

them, both in publick and private, as you may see in the 20. *verse*, and declares to them the whole Counsel of God, *ver.* 27. and now being called away, taken off by Divine Providence, by the will of his Master, the last and best office that he thought he could do for them, was to commit them to the care of God, and to leave them in his Arms, and to recommend them to his Grace.

It would be more then the time would permit, to look over the whole Apostles Sermon, which is partly Narrative, and partly Consolatory: Narrative, to put them in mind in what manner he had preached to them, from *ver.* 17. to *ver.* 27. And its partly Consolatory, from the 27. to the Text, wherein the Apostle could hold no longer, but his love constrains him, and makes him to break forth into this pathetical wish, or rather prayer, *And now Brethren, I commend you to his Grace.* As if he had said, I am just now going from you, not knowing that I shall see your face any more; now I am a dying man, as to my conversing with you any more; now I am departing, this is the best Legacy I can bequeath unto you, *To commend you to God, and to his grace.* And he speaks to persons as standing in the same relation with God and Christ, and having the same Father, and the same elder Brother: As if he should have said, you are as dear to me as my own flesh, as if you were my brethren by Consanguinity, and it is my sorrow that I must leave you; but as it is my greatest grief to part with you, yet I must leave you; and this the comfort, that I shall leave you in safe hands; I do not leave you to the wide world, I do not leave you as Orphans without a Father, as sheep without a Shepherd, but *I commend you to God, and to his grace.*

O happy word ! Though I must leave you, yet I trust God, who is able, will keep you ; as God is present everywhere by his Essence, so by his gracious presence more especially God is present with his people. I commit you, I commend you to God: I commit you to his care, to his keeping ; so the word signifies, so *Ravanelus* interprets the words, I trust you with God, I leave you as a *depositum* in Gods hands, as a dying man leaves his children in a friends hands to look after them ; as Christ did his Mother in *Johns* hands, so the Apostle leaves the *Ephesians* in the hands of God, and to the word of his grace ; that is, the Gospel that he had declared to them. The Word of God in Scripture is often called his grace, *2 Cor. 6. Ephes. 3. 5.* because it is a Declaration of the free grace of God to poor souls, and because it is the Spirits Instrument to work grace in the hearts of sinners.

This is remarkable, that after the Apostle had recommended them to God, he adds one word, *of his grace* : He doth not think it enough to mention recommending them to God, but to the word of his grace. The Expression is not for *Euphonia gratia*, it is no tautology, it is not for more then needs, but to shew how needful, and how necessary the word of Gods grace is, as well to the building up, as for the converting of poor sinners : and though God can build up a Saint immediately, yet ordinarily he doth it not but through the word of his grace, which is able to build you. *Beza* and *Calvin* refer this Clause to God, answering to that of the Apostle, *2 Cor. 9. 18. God is able to cause all grace to abound in you.* But *Erasmus* refers this word to the words of Gods grace, which is able to build you up. And this Construction is favoured by those two places

o Scripture, and may very well be meant both in 2 Tim. 3. 15. James 1. 21. both which places attribute o the Word of God, as this doth: and in the second place, *Receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.* So that both these words may be referred to this Clause, *The Word of God, and the Word of his grace*; to God as the Principal, and to the Word of grace as the instrumental cause to build them up: as much as if he had said, *I commend you to the grace of God, which is able to build you up.* The Apostle tells them, that he left them to such a God, as through the Gospel was sufficient to build them up, till he brought them to the full fruition of the Saints in light. The Apostle commends this to his Church, that were ready to weep, and say at his departure, *O Paul! God hath made thee a happy instrument of laying a good Foundation among us, of doing a great deal of good o our souls, and we may blefs God that we ever saw thy face: but now, alas! thou art going from us, we are afraid all thy pains will come to nothing; we should hope, that if God had pleased to continue thee amongst us, then we should have been built up: and surely, if God had intended good to us, and brought us to Heaven at last, he would no have taken thee from us.* No, sayes the Apostle, be not discouraged, though I leave you, yet *I commit you to God, and to the word of his grace.* If I be here, it is God alone that must build you up: I am but a poor, weak instrument in the hand of God, and when I am gone, God can build you up by some means or other, and carry you over, or thorow all oppositions, temptations, and discouragements, till he hath fitted you for himself, and given you an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified.

Thus

Thus you have the words explained in that familiar Paraphrase, and being thus opened, you may take notice that

The words hold forth the special care of the blessed Apostle of Jesus Christ: though he must leave them, yet he takes care to leave them in safe hands, that was able to give a good account of them: You have the Apostle making a deed of trust for the securement of the Saints at *Ephesus* after his departure: or if you will, you have the Apostles last Will and Testament.

1. You have the Person making over this Trust, *St. Paul*.

2. You have the Trust its self, and those were the Saints of *Ephesus*:

3. You have the Trustees, those to whom this trust is committed; and they are twofold. 1. To God.

2. To the Word of his grace. 3. Here is the time of making this Test, *now I am leaving of you*. 4. Here is the commendation of the Trustee, from the power and ability of him to manage this trust, and this is expressed in two particulars.

1. He is able to build you up; and then

2. To give you an inheritance: As if he should have said, I will leave you with such who are able to build you up. I might raise a multitude of Observations from the word: As first of all;

Doct. 1. *That it should be the care of a faithful Minister, when he is by the providence of God taken from a people, to recommend them to God, and to the Word of his grace.*

2. As it is the duty of a faithful Minister to do it, so it is his comfort that he may do it; that he may leave his people in the hand of God, who is able to build them up in grace.

3. It may be the comfort of any Church of Christ, that when they are deprived of faithfull Ministers, that yet they are left in the hands of God,

4. Though God can by his infinite power perfect grace, and bring men to heaven without the use of means: yet we have no ground or warrant to expect one or other, but through the Word of Gods grace.

5. And lastly, Though there be a glorious inheritance purchased and prepared by Jesus Christ, yet it is to be expected by none but those that are built up and sanctified: Or thus,

None must look for an inheritance hereafter, but such as are born of the Spirit, and built up in grace.

I might speak to many more, but I shall gather all that I have said into this one general Proposition, which is this.

Doct. That the best Farewell that a Gospel-Minister can give to his people that he loves and labours amongst, when he by the providence of God is taken from them, is to commend them to the Gospel, and to the Word of his grace.

Thus doth our holy Apostle when he was taken from his people, and left to preach to them no more, he recommends them to the hands of God. And thus doth a greater then St. Paul, even Jesus Christ himself, *The great Shepherd of the sheep*, as St. Peter calls him; when he was leaving the world, and could no longer preach to them, he commends them to God, *John 17. 11.* And now sayes Christ to his Father, *I am no more in the world, but these are in*
the

the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. And in the 14th, I have given them thy Word; he commends them to God, and the Word of his grace.

In the prosecution of this truth, I shall explain these particulars.

1. Shew you what it is in a Minister to recommend his people to God.
2. What it is that he should recommend them to God for.
3. Why he should be so carefull to recommend them to God.
4. How he should recommend them to God.

Lastly, Apply.

First, It is to leave them in the hand of God; to give them up unto Gods care and keeping, as I shewed you in the opening of the words; to commend them unto God, is to do that for them effectually, which he would fain do Ministerially, if he had been suffered to continue among them. As when a dying Father, or Husband commends his wife and children to some surviving intimate friend, it is a leaving, a committing them to that friend, to deal, and to do that for them, which he would have done if he had lived.

Now let us consider what it is that faithfull Ministers Designs and endeavours are to do for that Congregation that is committed to his charge. These four things especially every faithfull Minister endeavours to do while he is amongst his people.

1. Their conversion unto Sanctification.
2. Their building up, their Edification.
3. Their

3. Their Protection and Preservation.

4. Their Comfort and Consolation.

First, Their Conversion and turning to God.

This is that that a faithfull Ministers heart is set upon, that he may convert poor souls that are in a sinful state; that he may turn poor souls to God; that by often preaching, and praying, and counsell, he may bring them into a state of salvation, *Rom. 10. 1.* The Apostle there speaks of the *Romans*, that they were the people of God in profession; ah, but this was not enough: fain he would that they should be the people of God in truth; this is the hearty desire of every faithfull Minister, not only to bring his people to the outward profession of godliness, but to the work and power of it in their hearts; not only to have the name of Christian, but Christianity its self; and this is the end of all his studying, to get them to God by little and little, till Christ be formed in them, *Gal. 4. 11.* *My little Children*, sayes the Apostle, &c. *St. Paul* travels in birth with the *Galatians* from a state of nature to a state of grace; he would get grace wrought in their hearts, he would get them ingrafted into Christ; this is the end of his commending them to God, which he would fain have done, if he might have been suffered to preach to them. This is the language of a Ministers heart; Lord, thou knowest that it was the desire of my soul, that every one of this people should be made holy by the Word; I would fain have begotten them by the Ministry to Jesus Christ; but now by the providence of God I am taken off before my work is done; and thou seest yet there is a great many in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, in a state of death, and I am now likely not to do any thing more: now
it

it is my care, that those that belong to the election of grace, may be gathered home to thee.

2. To build them up in knowledge and faith. He endeavours that those that are already sanctified, may be further built up in their most holy faith; where there are the most eminent Saints, yet there is a great deal lacking. The Apostle gives great commendation of the *Thessalonians*, 1 Thes. 3. 10. They were a famous Church, and there were a great many eminent Christians, yet there was somethink lacking in their faith, and in their knowledge. Christ speaks to one of his most eminent Apostles, *Oh thou of little faith!* Though the Foundation-stone be laid, yet there is a superstructure behind, and this is the work of Christ, the building them up, *Ephes.* 4. 12. This is the end of every faithfull Minister, to make his people meet for Heaven; he would be feeding of them, that they may grow to the full measure of the stature of Christ; And therefore every godly Minister desires that he may be the Finisher, as well as the Author (under God) of their faith, that they may be built up to Christs heavenly Kingdom.

3. A Ministers aims are, that his people may be kept from danger. The people of God, after they are effectually called, they are continually in danger: they are as a Lilly amongst thorns, as sheep among wolves, as a besieged City in the midst of her Enemies.

They have enemies without, and enemies within: Enemies without, the Devil is their adversary.

1. They are in danger in respect of the Devil, who is a very potent Enemy, a roaring Lion, and a malicious Enemy, malicious against God: an industrious Enemy, he goes about seeking whom he may devour;

devour ; he compasseth the Earth, to do what he can to keep souls from Christ ; he is a subtil enemy, that hath his Stratagems to catch and insnare poor souls. Now it is the endeavour of every true Minister of Jesus Christ, to secure his people by his counsel, and his prayers ; for we are not ignorant of his devices, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. As if he should say, I have most experience of the Devils subtilty, Satan sets to oppose them most ; and this is one thing, to rob Ministers of their mediation, of their prayer ; and therefore it is the design of Ministers to strengthen their people in regard of Satans temptations.

2. They are in danger in respect of Seducers, that lie in wait to deceive.

3. They are in danger by the world, lest they should be frightened by its opposition.

4. They are in danger by their corrupt lusts, that war against their souls : Therefore every faithfull Minister warns his people of those, that their souls may be secured ; this being that that a faithfull Minister would do among his people while he is with them ; when he is taken from them, he commits them to God to be secured from all danger, as Christ in that place before, *Father, keep them in thy own hands.*

Lastly, Every faithfull Ministers seeks the comfort and consolation of his people. It is their desire to comfort the feeble hands ; they are not Masters of your grace, but Helpers of your joy, 2 *Cor.* 4. 21. Where the Gospell appears in power, many will stand in need of comfort, under doubts, fears, and afflictions ; and this is the desire of every faithfull Minister of Jesus Christ, in their departure from their people, to support the weak, to resolve the doubting, to succour the tempted ; and when he is
taken

taken from them, and can contribute little to this work, he recommends them to God. A departing Minister may say to his people, If God has made me an instrument of speaking comfort to your souls, you have cause to bless God for it. Now I can do no more, I must recommend you to God, who (I hope) will be the God of your comfort when I am gone.

2. This is the best Office that a Minister can do for his people when he is taken from them; and that whether we look upon Minister or people; certainly it is the best office that a Minister can do for his people, *To commend them to God.*

1. God is omnipotently, infinitely able.

2. God is gracious and faithfull, therefore willing to do it.

First, God is infinitely able to manage this trust, he is God all-sufficient, *Gen. 17. 1.* sufficient to make himself happy, much more to make his people happy.

1. God is all in all in the enjoyment of mercy.

2. God is all in all in the want of mercy.

First, He is all in all in the enjoyment of mercy. When a people have a faithfull Minister placed over them by the providence of God, he can do nothing of himself, *2 Cor. 3. 6.* Our Preaching is from the assistance of God; and when we have done all, we cannot make this effectually, we cannot give the success; *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but its God that must give the increase, 1 Cor. 3. 6.* Why do you keep such a stir? one would have this Minister, another that; one would have *Paul*, another would have *Apollos*, another *Cephas*; are they not the Ministers of God, by whom you have believed? Our profit

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profit depends not upon the parts and gifts of a creature, but upon the blessing of God; it is God that must put this heavenly Treasure into the heart, and it is God that must disperse it at last for the good and benefit of his people. The most eloquent *Apollos* cannot perswade obstinate sinners to lay hold upon the Gospel; they may speak to the ear, but it is God that must carry the word to the heart, either for Conviction or Conversion.

Secondly, God is all in all in the want of means. Let the instrument be never so weak, if it be in the hand of God, it shall prove effectuell: God can make a poor Fisherman instrumentall to catch three thousand souls at one time; and God chooseth to do his work by weak instruments, that the praise may be of God; It is not the Ministers parts or gifts, but only the power of God that strengthens the soul, and sanctifies, and builds them up and comforts them. God is able to Convert all unconverted sinners in a Congregation; God can say, *Ephata*, Be opened.

2. God is able to build up those that are converted; God is able to make all grace abound, *2 Cor. 9. 8.* Those that have little grace, God is able to make it increase; God is the God of all grace, God can make every Saint perfect, entire, lacking nothing; he can fill all the void places of the heart.

3. God can keep us in all trials and troubles; God can keep up his people in the midst of Apostacy, *Matth. 16. 13.* *The gates of Hell shall not prevail against them.* God can keep them, that all the power of Hell shall not hurt them.

4. God is able to comfort the most disconsolate soul. Ministers may speak comfortable words, but they

they cannot speak them further then to the ear; but God can speak them to the heart; *I will allure her into the wilderness, and speak to the heart.* God can comfort the poor soul, let the case be never so sad, 2 Cor. 1. 4.

2. As God is infinitely able, so he is infinitely gracious, and faithfull. See his Name in *Exod. 34. Full of power, and tender mercy.* Is not God willing for the conversion of poor sinners? willing as Ministers? yea, a thousand, and ten thousand times more. Hear how pathetically God speaks, *Turn ye, why will ye die? hear, and live.* He calls upon all men everywhere to repent.

Secondly, God doth not only desire it, but purposes it, and resolves. God that hath begun a good work, he will finish it; and so for their preservation, he hath said, *That the gates of Hell shall never prevail against them. Of all thou hast given me I have lost none,* Joh. 17. 11. Though God may suffer his people to be led away for a time, yet they shall be brought back again, and shall be kept through the power of God unto salvation: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle which God hath spoken.*

How willing is God to comfort all his comfortless ones? what Mother can be more pittisfull to her sick child, then God is to them that are under affliction? *Though a Mother forget her sucking child, yet God cannot forget his people.* And then he is the Father of all comfort, and there are many gracious promises God hath made to this purpose, that they may be as so many *Aqua vita* pledges of Consolation to his people: So that this will appear, That it is the best Office of a Minister, both to Minister and people, *To commend them to God.*

1. To Ministers, it is the highest expression of their love ; what greater testimony of their love can they shew to their people, to do all that for them, that he would willingly have done, and ten thousand times more ? Is it not an expression of love from a dying Father to his children, Dear children, I am now dying, I can provide for you no more ; I shall leave you such a friend that shall provide for you in more abundant measure than if I had been with you. It is the best demonstration of their faith.

1. That he will not leave them to the wide world ; and then

2. He will not take any one ; he will trust his people with none but God, who is able and willing to give account of them.

3. It is the great satisfaction to his heart. A Ministers leaving his people can never be satisfied in his own breast, that he should leave them, and commit them, and not to know to whom ; but when he knows with whom he hath committed them, when he hath delivered them over to God, that first committed them to him, this is a great quietment and satisfaction to a Ministers spirit : Every Minister takes a care of souls ; God layes the people as a *depositum*, and will require an account of them at the last day. Now when a Minister is taken from his people, he cannot be satisfied, till he hath delivered back his trust to God : Lord, here they are, and while I was with them I did what I could : but now I am taken from them, here I surrender them back into thy hand ; when I was in the world, I kept them in thy Name : and so it is best for the people to be left to such a one who will keep them in all their dangers, and comfort them in all afflictions.

3. How

3. How should a people be commended to God?

1. By Exhortation.

2. By Prayer.

First, by Exhortation. Thus the Apostle before and after my Text. And then by Prayer, for so doth *St. Paul*. *Calvin* looks upon these words as a prayer brought in, *Alwayes making mention of you in my prayers*, Rom. i. 19. Philip. i. 4. Col. i. 3.

And I trust that I shall not only now, at this solemn parture, but as long as I live, still recommend you into the hands of God; though I shall not preach to you, yet I still shall make mention of you in my prayers, that God would stablish, and comfort, and preserve you to his heavenly Kingdom.

4. Why doth the Apostle commend them to the Word of his grace? For these two Reasons.

First, Because all the good that any people can look for, is from God: it is declared and laid up in the Promises, and in the Gospell; there is the Treasure of God, it is in the Gospell: *The grace of God; which hath appeared to all men, bringeth salvation*, Tit. 2. 11. We could never have known the glorious mysteries of Salvation, had it not been for the grace of God: we could never have expected good, but from the Gospell; that is the great *Magna Charta*; wherein God hath made over whatsoever concerns the eternall good of his people: We have nothing to shew for grace, and comfort, and heaven, and glory, but his Gospell; that is the great deed of gift that God hath given to his people; poor sinners might look a Saviour, if the word of God

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had not revealed it : those people would have no ground to expect salvation, if God had not declared it in his Gospel to bestow it upon them.

2. The Gospel is the only instrument by which God brings, and conveys all that good to the soul that it stands in need of ; all spirituall and temporall good that accompanies Salvation.

God works nothing immediately upon the soul, but by the Gospel.

First, If any soul be converted to God, it is by the grace of God ; And as Conversion, so Sanctification, that is effected by the word of God ; so likewise is Edification, Salvation, and Preservation.

Use. I come now to the Application, It may be I have been too long already ; but God knows that it may be the last time that I may trespass in this kind ; and I have the Apostles example, who preached at *Troas* till midnight : but I promise to have done in a great deal less time.

Use, In the Application I shall in the Apostles Example, *Commend you to the grace of God.*

My Brethren, and dearly Beloved, and longed for, now God by his providence is taking me away from you, in the exercising of my publike Ministry, *I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace.*

This I shall do, First, by exhorting and counsel ; and then by prayer.

First, By way of Exhortation.

1. In reference to God, and then

2. In reference to the word of his grace.

First of all, my Exhortation in reference to God, is, that you would commit your selves to God ; If it should be so much a Ministers care to commend his

his people to God, its good reason they should commend themselves.

1. All a Ministers commending you to God will be to no purpose, if you do not commit your selves, *I shall alwayes make mention of you in my prayers*, as long as God shall continue me in this valley of tears ; *I shall pray that God should build you up, and sanctifie you* ; I shall pray for you, but God will not hear my prayers, if you do not hearken to my counsel, *To commit your selves to God.*

2. Consider, If you can so commit your selves to God, as to get God to take charge of you, you are made for ever.

1. God will be an All-sufficient God : instead of all thy friends in the world ; you shall not need any that shall provide for you to protect you ; God will be All in All, instead of Father, instead of Mother, Houses, Lands, Relations ; God will be better to you then ten Husbands, then ten Ministers ; Ah, better then ten thousand Worlds.

God can sweeten all your enjoyments, God can provide for you, and make you happy in the midst of the wants of creature-comforts ; God is a Sun and a Shield ; he will give grace and glory ; *and no good thing will he withhold from them that fear him.*

God contains all in himself *Eminenter* ; get God, and you get all : Let the World frown or smile, let it turn upside down : though the Mountains be thrown into the midst of the Sea, though the World be set on fire, yet a Soul that is in Gods keeping is happy ; *God is a present help in time of trouble.*

2. As God is an All-sufficient friend, so he is a firm and a fast friend to them : *My Father and M-*

ther forsook me, then the Lord took me up, Psal. 27. 10.
 My flesh and my heart fails, but Gods fails me not ;
 though my Minister and my friends leave me, yet
 God will not leave me ; he is engaged by his own
 promise, truth, and faithfulness, *I will never, never,
 never, &c. leave thee nor forsake thee.*

If you do not forsake God, God will never forsake you ; if once you have so committed your selves to God, as God accepts the charge, he hath undertaken that you shall never depart from him : It is part of the Covenant, and he is engaged to all the Relations wherein he stands to his people, as a Husband, as a Farher, as as Master.

But you will say, How shall we commit our selves to God, that God may have a charge of us ? I will give you one direction for all.

1. Take God to be your God, and give up your selves to be his people ; if you will, before you and I part, heartily and unreservedly give up your selves to God, to be his people, it will be the comfortablest day that ever I saw, though in other respects it may be the saddest ; as certainly God is your God, so certainly he will keep you ; if you will avouch your selves to be Gods, I will avouch God to be yours.

1. You must take God to be the portion of your souls inheritance, lay up all your happiness in God : for if you choose any thing else for your happiness but God, God will have nothing to do with you : God will be All or nothing ; Your hearts must say as Davids, *Lord thou art my portion ; whom have I in Heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* He accounted all nothing for God : God was his happiness, God was his portion, God was his All in All.

2. You

2. You must make God the center of all your love and delight : God will have all from you, or nothing ; you must not divide your affection between God and the world : you must love nothing in comparison of him, love nothing but in subordination to him : as you would have God to be wholly yours, so you must be wholly his.

3. You must take God to be the strength and shield of your hearts ; if you would have God to take care of you, so you must cast your care upon God : if you place your hope any where else, there will be no sure hold, the Anchor of your hope must be cast no where else ; if you lay your burden anywhere else, God will not lend you a finger to help you ; but if you place your hope in God, God will help you ; your extremity shall be his opportunity.

4. You must take God to be the guide of your hearts ; if you would have the priviledge of Gods guard, you must keep in Gods way ; keep in Gods way, and you will be sure of Gods protection ; do you keep Gods precepts, and God will keep your persons ; do what God commands, and avoid what God forbids, and then you need not fear what will become of you.

Let the World frown, and Friends forsake you, resolve that you will follow God wheresoever he leads you : then he will be your God all your dayes, and he will guide you here by his counsel, till at last he bring you to his glory : And this leads me to the second Exhortation, in respect to the Gospel.

Secondly Brethren, *I commend you to the word of Gods grace.* I commend you to the Precepts of God, to be obeyed by them, I commend you to the Promises of God, to be believed by you.

1. Keep them, and hold them fast carefully ; it is
F 3 your

your Treasure, it is your Life ; keep it, and it will keep you : it is all that you can shew for Heaven ; I leave it as a *Depositum* : if you part with it, take heed how you will answer it at the last day ; it is the Talent which God hath committed to you, for which you will be commended for keeping at the great day. Hold fast the Word of Gods grace, there is old tugging by the Devill and his instruments, either to pull you from the Word, or the Word from you. Let go any thing rather then the Gospell, let go your Friends, your Estates, your Lives, rather then let go the Gospell.

Study Gods Word : do not keep them by for no purpose, *Search the Scriptures, for in them you hope for eternall life.* There's the Pearl of great price, there is Direction, there is Comfort ; this Book of God will make you wise unto Salvation.

If you never hear Sermon more, you have enough by the use of the Bible to carry you to Heaven ; There's Divinity, there is holiness and heaven almost in every syllable, when you cannot have it preached to you. Be much in the study of it.

Then practice it conscionably ; Be not only hearers, but doers of it ; let your conversation be such as becomes the Gospell. It was the Apostles advice to the *Philippians*, and its mine to you, *Let your conversation be such as becomes the Gospell.* Let your conversation become the Precepts, the Priviledges, the Promises of the Gospell. Having then thus commended you to God, give me leave before we part, to commend God and his Gospell to you.

I. Make it your daily business to walk with God, make him the companion of your lives, converse with God every day in the inward of your hearts ; He that is a stranger with God, God will soon be a stranger

to him; and if you neglect God one day, you may be to seek him when you may most need him.

2. Live in the daily exercise of grace and godliness.

1. Live in the continuall exercise of Faith, live by it, you have need of the exercise of that grace every day; you can as well live without food, as live without faith; it is that grace which feeds upon Christ.

2. Be much in the exercise of the fear of the Lord all the day long; be afraid to sin against God; in the secret of your souls mind his presence, in all places, in all company, in all businesses.

3. Be much in the exercise of Humility; live humbly, and think better of others then your selves; Humility will exceedingly adorn your profession.

4. Be much in the exercise of Repentance. Be frequent and constant in prayer, *Pray continually*; do it spiritually, and do it exactly, as to the season of it.

5. *Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.* Whatever you do for God, do it with all your might; do not put off God with the skin, but give him the marrow.

6. Be carefull, not only to keep up secret, but Family-worship; the less preaching there is in publick, the more catechising and instructing there should be in private. I know no more likely means then the setting up the worship of God in private families.

7. Prize the Sabbath; be strict and exact in the observation of the Lords day. I have shewed you many times wherein the spirituall observation of it doth consist; it is your seed-time, your market-day;

it is a sign you shall one day celebrate an everlasting Sabbath with God in the highest Heavens.

8. Be stedfast in the wayes of God in a backsliding Age ; Keep your ground, while others fall away ; stand fast in faith ; be not ashamed to own Christ before all the world ; reckon upon the reproaches of Christ, and count them greater riches then the Treasures in *Egypt*. Do not place Religion in a few shadows, when the substance is neglected : do not think that God will be put off with the skin without the substance ; and by your holy conversation labour to put to silence the foolishness and ignorance of wicked men, that men may have nothing to accuse you but in the matters of Jesus Christ, that you may cut off occasion from them that seek occasion. Let no reproach make you lay aside holiness : and say, *If this be to be vile, I will be vile still.* And love all those that have been instrumentall for your spirituall comfort.

Forget not to contribute to the necessity of the poor Saints ; think that God hath given you your Estates for such a time as this, for this is acceptable to God ; *Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despightfully use you : so shall you heap coals of fire of fire upon of their heads ; when you are reviled, revile not again.* Do your duty to your Superiours, to those that God hath set over you, and so carry your selves as it was in the case of *Daniel*, that they may find nothing against you save in the matter of your God. In all things let your conversation be as becomes the Gospell of Jesus Christ, *That I may rejoyce in the day of the Lord Jesus, that we have not run in vain, and laboured in vain.*

And labour to keep up that Christian love which in this place hath been more eminent then any where

I know. I would preach St. *Johns* Doctrine, *Little children, love one another* : And that my expression may be pathetically, I shall speak it in the words of the Apostle, in *Phil. 2. 1, 2.* *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

I now have but a word more, speaking of yours and mine own comfort under this sad dispensation.

1. It is a Ministers comfort, that when he is taken from his people, he can yet commend them to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

And truly, my dearly beloved in the Lord, this is my great work now, when I am a dying to you as to my publike Preaching: My Beloved, I am very sensible that it is a very sad and solemn thing for a Minister to be rent from a people that he loves as his own soul, that he hath laboured among; for to bid adieu to these solemn meetings, wherein I have preached to you, wherein we have mingled our sighs and our tears before the Lord, wherein we have rejoiced and sat down together before the Lord at his Table, now to think that I must minister with you and for you no more in these Ordinances, methinks it is a heart-breaking consideration; to think that I am now dying in this Congregation; to think that I am now dying whilst I am preaching; but this is my comfort under these sad thoughts, that I can commit you to God, and to the Word of his grace; to one that is able to keep you, and to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified. Like a dying Father, I can commend you to the care

of

of such a Friend, infinitely able to supply all that I could not do for you.

It is the comfort of a dying Father, when he sees his children weeping round about him, that he can commend them to a faithfull friend, willing to do that for them that he desired to do, and a thousand times more.

I would hope that I have some children that I have begotten to Christ by my Ministry, towards whom my bowels yern; but this is my comfort, that I can put them into the arms of their and my heavenly Father, and their and my blessed Redeemer, to be kept by the power of God.

There are many poor souls that are yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; and if the Lord had seen good, I would fain have seen of the travell of my soul in their salvation; but I can commend them to God, who knows them who belong to his Election: he can either restore me, or can do it by another hand; and you that are in any measure grown in grace, I would be willing to be helpfull to your joy, and instrumentall to your comfort; but *I commend you to God, who is able to give all grace to you, and to keep you stedfast.*

It will be some alleviation of sorrow, that though I must leave you, and die to you as to your publick Ministry, yet I hope I may a while go up and down, and converse with you, to be among you. The Lord grant this favour, that he may behold your stedfastness.

2. This may be your comfort as well as mine; this may be the comfort of all those poor Congregations that are like to be made Widdows by the Metaphoricall death of their Guides and Pastors; but I leave you into the hands of all grace and of all comfort.

This

This is a black day upon *Israel*, when so many faithfull Ministers are slain at one blow; this is a day of gloominess and darkness in many Congregations, for so many Ministers to be beheaded in one day!

What hath *England* committed? is it not some High Treason? If we look to the cause of it, why so many Ministers are as dead in one day, as so many children without a Father.

And if we look upon the cause, what hath caused God thus to deal with us, we must complain, Oh! our unfruitfulness! our fearfull unthankfulness under the mercies of God! This will be the *Emphasis* and sting of our grief; and this should be the matter of our grief.

And then, if we consider the sad Prognostick, what it doth seem to foretell; It is a sign, that when God layes aside so many faithfull Ministers, of some scourge and calamity that is coming upon us.

But you that can lament this Judgement, you that can lament the sad deprivation of these powerfull Ordinances, Remember, that though your Ministers be dead, God can raise you up others in their stead; and where instruments are wanting, he can do it without them; and those that are begot in Christ, shall be preserved; and those that are yet unbrought in, who belong to the Election of Grace, shall in Gods due time have the effectuall work of the Spirit wrought upon their Souls: *For he is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among them that are sanctified.*

And though I take this solemn leave of you, as to this publick Exercise, yet if the Lord shall open the door, and take off those bands of Death that the Law hath laid upon my Ministry in regard of Conscience, who cannot conform, for which our
publick

76 The Pastors Farewell to his people, &c.

publick Ministry is suspended, I shall cheerfully and willingly return to you in this place.

But now, though your dying Minister, in respect to the Exercise of his publick Ministry, is leaving of you, yet I commit you into a safe hand, *I commend you to God, and to his Grace. Amen.*

Mr.



Mr. Pledger's Farewell Sermon.

Rev. 2. 9, 10.

*I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty,
(but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy
of them which say they are Jews, and are
not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*

*Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer;
Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into pri-
son, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tri-
bulation ten dayes: be thou faithfull unto
death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*



N the former verse you have the su-
perscription and description of this
Epistle: the superscription by the
mouth and hand of *John*, to the Angel
of the Church of *Smyrna* (that is)
the ministry of the Gospell, or the Colledge of Pres-
byters:

byters : As the whole Tribe of *Levi* in *Malachy* is called *the Angel of the Lord* : so here, the whole Tribe and office of the Ministry is called the Angel : Angel is not a term that signifies a single person, but a name of Office. Then for the Description (*These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive*) He is described by his eternity, by his suffering, and by his reviving ; I shall not speak of this, nor of the verses following the Text. I shall speak of the Inscription or Narration of the Epistle in these two verses, wherein you have, 1. A Commendation : 2. An Admonition, a piece of heavenly Counsel.

1. You have a Commendation, *I know thy works, &c.* I like it well, the pains thou takest in my service for my servants sake ; I know how thou hast suffered ; I take all well, I consider all the reproaches that are vomited out against thee.

2. Then you have the Counsel. 1. Fear none of these things. 2. The Arguments to set it on.

1. 'Tis the Devil that shall trouble you : he is the prime Agent, he that never took a good cause : Thou hast certainly God for thee if thou hast the Devil against thee.

2. This Devil shall be checked and restrained.

1. As to the number of them he shall deal withall ; [*The devil shall cast some of you into prison*] He aims at all, but he shall come short of many.

2. In respect of the kind of the Affliction. [*Cast some into prison*] He aims at our souls, to disturb the peace of them, to cast us into hell : I but it shall be but into prison.

3. For the design of this Affliction [*Not for destruction, but to try us*] It shall not be as wood in the fire, to be consumed : but as gold in the fire, to be tried.

4. For

4. For the term of duration : it shall not be for ever [*But for ten dayes*] for a time, for a set time, for a short time ; perhaps thou shalt lose thy life : *But be thou faithfull unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

Before I go out I shall endeavour to shine in the whole light of this Text, in these six or seven Propositions.

Pro. 1.

First, Jesus Christ takes notice of all the work, and trouble, and losses that we endure for him. There cannot be a godly word spoken but the Lord hears it, takes notice of it : not a day of humiliation, not a tear, not a prayer, not a sigh, not a cup of cold water, but the Lord sets it down : *Item* at such a time thou didst lose a thing, hazard such a concernment. Now this knowledge lies in two things. 1. It implies an Approbation. 2. A Recompence : *I know what thou doest*, what thou sufferest, so as to approve it, and so as to recompence it. Now then if God takes notice of what we do and suffer for his Name, then either we must say he hath not good enough, or not time enough to bestow that good upon us, or not faithfulness enough to perform his promise, before we can be moved from his service.

Pro. 2.

Secondly, I observe. Believers in their poorest condition, when they have lost all, they are rich : *I know thy poverty, but thou art rich.* The only wise man is the only rich man (so saith the Philosopher) but the Believer

Believer is the rich man (so saith the Wisdom of God in the Text.) And the riches of a Believer lies in five things.

1. In his interest; he hath a God for his portion: Faith doth unite and implant into the Lord Jesus Christ; so that we are become spiritually rich to the utmost degree of happiness: saith, *David, The lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, I have a goodly heritage.* All that rich Love of God which is stronger then death it self: a rich Covenant of grace shines in the Promises as so many pearls: he will not withhold any thing that is good; nor suffer any thing that is evil to fall upon us, that shall not turn to good. How rich are they that are rich in God?

2. Believers must needs be rich in their Relations; *Our communion is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;* They that are married to Christ, and have an interest in him; they must certainly contract very honourable Allies, the Brother of Jesus Christ, a Member of Christ: she that marries a Prince or King, is a Queen; What title of honour shall we give to one that is espoused to Jesus Christ?

3. The Believer is honourable in his possessions: To name but two, possession of Grace, possession of Peace: Grace and Peace, there is your riches: so the Lord salutes you in his Word; the least drachm of grace is more then all the world: and this is the character of one that hungers and thirsts after Christ. And then for comforts which are grounded upon grace and the work of grace: for the spring of grace is a spring of joy: *In the world you shall have trouble, but in me peace: and in the midst of my troubled thoughts (saith David) thy comforts delight my soul.*

4. A Believer is rich in regard of his expectation, that

that reversion, that blessed hope that is reserved for him. A Believer his Character is, to long and look for the appearance of Christ: The Believer is rich in the everlasting Kingdom of glory.

5. A Believer is rich in the things of this life: he can live above these things, he can be content without them: contentation is your riches: you shall want nothing that is good; why then have we not enough? and if we have enough, why do we not see our riches? Because God doth not shake down the Acorns from the tree of common Providence, which he does to the herds of the world, but feeds us with childrens bread, shall we therefore repine? Let us see our riches even in the things of this life. He that beleives on Christ, is in such a condition as can know no want: He that is not in Christ, cannot be rich: He that is in Christ, cannot be poor. Judge not of his condition by what he appears outwardly. A Believer is worth as much as the Promises come to, which are his Character; as much as the Kingdom of Heaven comes to, which is his reversion.

Prop. 3.

Christ takes notice of all the reproaches and blasphemies of his Adversaries: *I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews and are not, but are of the Synagogue of Satan.* Christ counts himself reproached when his servants and wayes are reproached: *The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.* A Christian doth quarter Arms with Christ; therefore all the reproaches of the black mouths, they are especially taken notice

of by Jesus Christ. There is not a word they can speak, but is presently recorded among the *memorandums* of Jesus Christ. Repent, if it be possible: the word in thy tongue, the thought in thy mind may be forgiven; I say, if it be possible, though a malicious scoffer does seldom return.

Prop. 4.

Whatever the Children of God suffer at any time before the Grave, they must suffer still [*I know thy works, and Tribulation (nay yet the wind is not over)* in the next verse *thou shalt suffer*] After great expences of blood and treasure, still more heavy calamities: the water of Tribulation doth rise higher and higher, till the believer resists unto blood striving against sin: you must expect it, you must go with your lives in your hands, resolving upon the greatest trouble, to wade through a deep flood of calamities, nor one piece of the Cross excepted.

Prop. 5.

Christ usually gives notice to his people in their sufferings, he tells us before hand. So *John* 16. 7. *Matth.* 24. 9. *Acts* 9. 16. There never did befall any great tryal, but the Church of God had notice of it: *Abraham* had notice of *Sodom's* destruction: *Noah* had notice of the old worlds destruction: *Abraham* again had notice of the ruine of *Egypt*; So the Anti-Christian trouble must come upon the Church, rise higher and higher, specially in the last dayes: they are set down exactly in the book of the *Revelations*: And the Reasons are,

I. That

1. That Gods people may not be offended when troubles come, *John 16. 1. I told you that you might not be offended.* Look for them that you may not be terrified by reason of the unexpectedness of them.

2. That he might convince us that there is nothing befalls us without his privity; he that foresees them, he must needs see them; he that forecasts them, he must needs have the ordering of them; *not a hair of your heads falls to the ground without his Council, without his hand.*

3. That we might provide for them; *know you not the coming of the Son of Man?* When Christ comes with notable mercies, usually he sends his harbingers; we must therefore be as Noah: *being warned of God, believing his word, he was moved with fear and built an Ark.*

Prop. 6.

What ever troubles come upon the people of God, they have no cause to fear; *fear none of these things thou shalt suffer: be carefull for nothing* (its very comprehensive) There is a fear that we cannot be without, and there is a fear we may not admit; A fear there is of dependance, this furthers our preparation, prayer, renouncing our selves, flying to the Lord Jesus under his wings; that's a blessed fear of trouble that makes us to come neerer to God; But then there's a fear of dispondency, Apostasie, a fear of distraction, so as to be dismayed, discouraged. There is no ground of slavish fear as to God: no ground of fatal a fear of man, of any thing that man can do to us; And the Reason is,

1. All our sufferings are ordered by a Father: it

is the potion that thy Father gives thee to drink: what ever bitter ingredient there is in it, still its of thy Fathers procuring: why wilt thou suspect it to be poyson and afraid of it? no, be encouraged.

2. Fear not: Christ stands by thee in all thy sufferings: The Angel stood by Christ in his Agony to comfort him: but Christ stands by us in our Agony, in our contending for the Faith: fear not (saith God) *O worm Jacob, I will be with thee*: He is alwayes with us, though sometimes as to sense it is otherwise: nay if Christ be neerer to us at any time, it is when trouble is most neer us. (*O Lord be not far off, for trouble is neer*, saith the Psalmist) That trouble is blessed that engages God to be neerer to us, that engages us to come neerer to God.

3. Fear not what ever it is that we suffer: there shall be sufficient strength given to bear it, to go through it: God will never lay more upon thee then he will enable thee to bear: and if thy strength be increased proportionably, it is all one for thee to lift a pound weight, and to lift a hundred pound weight.

4. Fear not any of these sufferings, because none of them shall hurt thee: God hath said he will stave off all evil from thee (*no evil shall come nigh thy dwelling*) and he that fears the Lord shall not be visited of any evil, Prov. 19. 23. No hurt shall come, nothing shall come to thee amiss (that is) as to thy soul, and the soul is the man: there shall be no impairing to thy soul, to thy best interest: thou shalt lose nothing but that thou canst not keep, nothing that enters into the other world to make up thy happiness, thou shalt lose nothing to do thee good: no loss of communion with God; no loss of grace, peace and comfort; thy interest shall not be shaken,

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thy Communion shall not be diminished.

But why do I speak of no hurt? there shall come a great deal of good by these troubles. When God calls thee to suffer, and thou wilt put him off with doing, make it up that way, God loses by it, and thou dost lose that thou dost: but if you would buckle your self to that service God calls for; active when it is active; passive when its passive; this is that piece of godliness that is *great gain*. Thou wilt either live or dye, and shalt gain both wayes; if thou livest, thy Graces shall be better, the spirit of God shall rest upon thee; if thou dye, thy glory which is weighty, shall be double; the weightier the Cross, the weightier the Crown; be content to go as Christ did from the Cross to the Crown. Let us strive against our carnal lusts, those few things that are ready to choak our faith, disparage God; and cut the Sinews of our endeavour to any service God calls us to.

1. Consider our troubles are like to be great: here is the Symptoms of Gods displeasure upon us, here is the pouring out of such a providence among us, as is usually attended with destructive Judgements. *Sodom's* calamity was coming when one *Lot* was discharged: *Germany's* calamity was coming when one *Luther* was taken away; Lord then what woe is this to sleep away so many faithful, painful labourers at once; but its our Duty to suffer patiently and not complain.

2. As our troubles must be great, so, many will fear, and in fearing faint; we see it come to pass, and you will find it more and more: There are those that run with the Footmen, that will not keep pace with the Horsemen, that may be left behind and be trod under foot: our troubles are likely to

arise according to all we can learn from Scripture and providence, and very many there be that will shrink.

3. Consider it is a very difficult thing to stand stedfast in a day of evil: you cannot name any of Gods Children, but when they have indeed come to it, their carnal fears have been working so *as their feet have almost slipt*, they have been almost gone, but that for the promise of God, that he would lay no more upon them then he would enable them to bear.

O but you will say, What will become of the publique interests, of the name and Church of God? and what shall become of my private interest?

I answer, You have no ground of fear (according to Scripture) in either of these respects.

First, As to the publique name of God, the interest of his Church, of his truth, of righteousness, of a real Reformation, interest of our prayers and hopes, be not afraid.

1. God bears a dear respect unto his people: they are represented in Scripture by all names that may import dearness and nearness unto him: the interest of his glory is bound up in his people: he calls *Israel* his Glory: We know the interest of men is that which moves the world: but the interest of God, of his Glory, no doubt will be the ground of safety and security unto us, even till God take us to Heaven. For the interest of Gods Justice, God made Hell; and for the interest of his mercy and grace he gave Jesus Christ to die to take effect here amongst the Children of men; do you think God will forget his interest?

2. Remem;

2. Remember Gods wayes are in the deep; you cannot tell what God is doing; when you think thoughts of destruction and confusion, My thoughts towards you saith God, are thoughts of peace: And truly, God he does not save a Soul, nor does not promote the Salvation of his Church in any eminent degree, but it is in a way that is cross and contrary to the sense and expectation of flesh and blood: in so much you know the darkness of our condition has been the entrance upon deliverance: as just before the day dawns, its the darkest of the night: when God looked and there was none to help them, sayes he, my arm brought salvation.

Thus it is with you that are effectually called: you have received the sentence of death; the entrance upon your deliverance, is the darkest time of your condition.

3. God can do great things. *Joel 2. fear not, thy God O Sion can do great things.* It is the disparagement that we offer to God, we ascribe more to the Creature then we do to God, when we give way to carnal fear; fear not what man can do, because of the power of God which was his shield and buckler; Is any thing too hard, too heavy for God? and when God does great things, he usually goes on to do greater; though he may seem to suffer his work to be thrown back to confusion, and his people may be ready to say We thought he had redeemed *Israel*, that degree of Reformation shall not be lost. You know in *Luthers* time, take any special degree of Reformation in the Church, and it seemed to be opposed by the Gates of Hell: when it was brought upon the stage to any hopefull degree, then it was taken as it were utterly out of sight for a while: but it was never lost: thus God is but make-

ing way for his own glory to appear in these great works.

O but you will say, What shall become of my particular? It is enough God hath promised that we shall not want any thing that is truly good, and that nothing that is evil shall fall upon us and lie upon us: though we do not see deliverance, it shall be: whatever our sad thoughts and tremblings of heart may be, yet give God the glory of his word: Take these few Directions.

1. Strive to strengthen thy Faith. Faith is that which layes hold on Christ: and Christ is your strength: therefore faith is said to do that which Christ does: let every day drive thee to a renewed act of Faith: Take heed, be not shaken in the faith of the Cause, be not shaken in the faith of Christ (*fides causa, fides Christi*) Be not shaken upon the Cause, which upon utmost examination we find to be according to the word, hold that; *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot and tittle of this Cause.* And then do not shake in the Faith of Christ, that is, in your laying hold, in your applying your selves to him, in your resting and settling upon him: beg of God to strengthen your faith.

2. Get more Self-denial; we must forsake all, we must not except an thing. A man would part with his life as easily as with a pin off his sleeve, if he had but some considerable growth in self-denial.

3. Get a great deal of love towards that Christ that loved us with a love stronger then death: get love of that Christ that may be stronger then life. Let nothing in the world be of any consideration with you, so as Christ may be magnified in your bodies: love will breed courage, and cast
out

out fear : slavish fear before God, carnal fear before men.

4. Get a true insight into an account of suffering and troubles whence they are ; they issue from the same love with redemption of your souls from hell, and your glorification : God doth every thing in pursuance of the purpose of his love ; he doth every thing according to the platform and pattern of his thoughts towards us from eternity. Consider what troubles are, and to what end ; not to destroy, but to try : to wean from the world, to fit for heaven.

5. Get an insight into the vanity of the creature : you reckon the creature some great matter , and that is the reason of your love, and of your fear.

6. Get the fear of God , that may over-rule other fears : *Fear not him that can but kill the body, but fear him that is able to cast body and soul into hell fire.*

7. Keep a clear conscience void of offence towards God and towards men : by a heart abasing confession of what is past , and the application of the blood of Christ , and by mortification and watchfulness therein keep your selves from evil for the time to come.

8. Get a better assurance of eternal life ; a glimpse and sight of this would make a man run through the very flames of hell. How comfortable was *Steven* when a shower of stones was about his ears, to see Jesus standing at the right hand of God ! I wonder how they dare to venture their life that have no ground of a better life ; but for those that have a well-grounded hope of the mercy of God, they say, We reckon these light afflictions, which
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are but for a moment, to work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. *Fear not any of these things which you shall suffer.*

Prop. 7.

Christ does limit Satan, he hath him in a string, him and all his instruments; (*The Devil shall cast some of you into prison, &c.*) Every word hath its weight: Who shall do it? the Devil; What shall he do? *cast you into prison*; How far? some of you; How long? *ten dayes*: For what use? that you may be tryed: Christ as he hath Satan in a chain of providence, so he hath a chain of restraint; it is Christ that sets a circle about him, he cannot cause a hair of thy head to fall: he is in the hand of Christ; they are as truly under him and his hand, as they are against him; If God lets alone his enemies, what shall they not do? If God lets alone his people, what shall they do?

2. God hath a special Providence about the things of his Church by way of Eminency, by way of permission, and ordination.

3. You will not deny but there's power enough in God to destroy all that are against him, and to limit all, and all shall make to the praise of God, and to his peoples good.

4. The Lord is exceeding merciful: he cannot hold when the Enemy comes to insult, to blaspheme, and revile; *Now will I arise, saith God, and set him at liberty from him that puffeth at him*: there is not only a judging of their Enemies hereafter, but a judging of them here: *the world shall say, Verily there is a God that rewardeth righteousness, verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.*

5. God

5. God hath a special design in hand : therefore just so far as he will carry on that design God hath towards his people (which is alwayes a design of faithfulness) just so far shall the enemy go, *Isa. 10.* The Enemy means not so, he means to cut off a people, not a few ; but Gods end was otherwise, and he will overrule them : this is the Comfort, there is a set time, there is an end.

There is a difference between the afflicting of Gods people, and judging their enemies : In the intention, and extension : one is for ruine, the other in proportion : one is a light affliction, the other a load. And then for extension, one is for ever, and the other is for time, for ten dayes. Then our afflictions shall have an end, I and a comfortable end : Are not these two ends comfortable, the end of our sins, and the end of our sorrow ? God will restore comfort to his mourners ; let us be mourners during the time of mourning : God will quickly cloath us with garments of praise : there shall be an end of our sufferings, never an end of our joy and glory.

Prop. 8.

To conclude in a word, *Be faithfull to the death* : Be faithful in your promises, in your vows and purposes, your Covenants of obedience and reformation : persist in the doctrine of the Gospel, and the worship of the Gospel, and the ministry of the Gospel, and office Christ hath fixt in his Church : be faithfull by your most earnest, zealous desires before the Lord : *Be faithfull to the death* : he will never let you see death till all your fears are conquered ; he can

can presently take them away; he will certainly be present with you in all your troubles. And remember, God in tender mercy and faithfulness, for the present accepts the unfeigned purpose to be constant and faithfull to him to the death.

Mr.



Mr. *Lamb's* Farewell Sermon,
Preached *August. 17. 1662.*

John 14. 23.

Jesus answered, and said unto him; If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our Abode with him.



HE Departure of *Jesus Christ* unto his Father, from whose botome he came into the World, was very sadly resented by his Disciples: whose mixt passions produce a very great disturbance, and trouble upon their Spirits.

The inward Anxiety, and unconcealed grief of the Disciples, move the Bowels of their more affectionate Lord, to pittie their case, and provide for their relief, and give them instructions how to express their love unto him in his absence, not so much in carrying blubber'd eyes, and heavy hearts, as by remembring, and observing the Counsels and Instructions that he had given to them, while he was present with them; So that this whole Chapter is filled up with Counsels, and Comforts, Directions, and Consolations.

First, Directions and Counsels, especially in the 1, 13, 15. verses.

First, To the exercise of Faith, *verse 1.* *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.* And this is the life, even a life of Faith, which we must live, till we come to the enjoyment of *Christ*, by which we fetch

com-

comforts in all troubles, and strength against all tentations from *Jesus Christ*.

Secondly, To the duty of Prayer, *verse 13.* which is the proper duty of an afflicted State, as *James 5. 13. Is any afflicted? let him pray.* By prayer the Soul empties his complaints into Gods bosome, and finds ease, by telling him of all the trouble and grief that attends his state: Prayer hath that Divine excellency, that like a Heavenly Charm, it speaks away trouble, and speaks in comfort; as it is said of *Hannah, 1 Sam. 1. 18. She prayed, and went away, and did eat, and her Countenance was no more sad;* and thus our prayers always speed, when they be made by the help of the Spirit, and offered up to God in the name of *Christ, ver. 13, 14. Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that you shall receive.*

Thirdly, To obedience, in *ver. 15.* to do the work committed to them; *If ye love me, keep my commandments.* You cannot better exprels your love to me, then in keeping my words; Nor is there a more certain way for men to find comfort than this, *by keeping his Commands;* for then, though they cannot enjoy his person, yet they shall not miss his promise.

Secondly, The Consolations which he gives them in *ver. 2, &c.* in *ver. 16, &c.* and *ver. 23, &c.*

First, In the *2, 3, 4. verses, &c.* From the place wherhet he was going, *To his Father, and their Father, his Home, and their Home;* whence he did intend to come again to them. So that his going from them, was but a Recess, or withdrwing for a time, untill he came; for in *verse 3. I will come again, and receive you to my self,* rendred in the Greek, *I come again,* in the present tense, to intimate the certainty of his coming to them again, as if he were already come; which in *ver. 28.* of this Chapter, *Christ* tells them, should be matter of great Joy to them. *If ye loved me, ye would*

would rejoyce, because I said I go unto the Father.

Secondly, From ver. 10. The promise of the Spirit, which shall supply his absence: such a Spirit, as shall teach them, comfort them, and be instead of all to them, give them such Joy, Courage, and Peace, as the world can neither give, nor take away, ver. 27. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, &c.*

Thirdly, In the 23. verse, in the Text, *We will come, and make our abode with him, while you keep my words;* which is the great promise here.

If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

The words of the Text are an answer to the question of Judas, (not Iscariot) Lord, how is it, that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus Christ gives the answer, *If a man love me, he will keep my words, &c.* To him the promise is made, That that the Father will love him. They love him that keep his words: and to these he hath said, *he will manifest his love to them, and make his abode with them:* In which words there are three parts considerable.

First, A Supposition, *If a man love me, he &c.*

Secondly, A Position; which is the effect of that love, *He will keep my words.*

Thirdly, A Promise. Which is twofold.

First, Of the Fathers love. *My Father will love him.*

Secondly, The Co-habitation of the Father and Son with such a person. *We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

The Observations that I intend to insist upon are two.

First, That it is the duty & special property of them that love Jesus Christ in sincerity, to keep the words of Christ.

Secondly, That God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his words.

First,

First, *Of the first of these*, That it is the duty and special property of them that love *Jesus Christ* in sincerity, to keep the words of *Christ*.

If any man love me, he will keep my words, he will do my will, walk in my wayes, treasure up my truths and Counsells.

This Doctrine requires three things to be spoken to in their order.

First, That Jesus Christ must be truly loved.

Secondly, What it is to keep his words.

Thirdly, Why it is both the duty and property of them that love him, to keep his words.

First, That Jesus Christ must be truly loved: there is such an indispensible necessity of this, that the Apostle sayes, *1 Cor. 16. 22. If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha, let him be cursed.*

But because every one pretends highly to love *Jesus Christ*, and but few that love him indeed, I shall shew two things more briefly :

First, Who he is that truly loves him.

Secondly, Why we should all truly love him.

First, Who he is that truly loves Christ.

First, He truly loves Jesus Christ, who upon the discovery, and tender of *Jesus Christ* in the Gospel, as *King, Priest, and Prophet*, can willingly deny all for him ; as the Merchant, *Mat. 13. 45, 46.* sold all that he had for the goodly Pearl. And so *Paul, Phil. 3. 8.* accounts all *Dung*, his parts, his righteousness by the Law, his greatest excellencies : He loves *Christ* in *Deed*, and not in *Shew* only, who can leave the world, his dearest lusts, his best righteousness for *Christ*.

This is a true conjugal love, *Psal. 45. 10. Hearken O daughter, and consider, and encline thine ear, forget also thine own people, &c.* When *Christ* sees that we have such a love to him, that we will part with all for him, then he sees a beauty in us that delights him.

Secondly,

Secondly, He truly loves *Jesus Christ*, who having received him, will rather lose all then part with him again, who accounts *Jesus Christ* better then his best things, as he sayes in *Mat. 10. 37.* *He that loves Father or Mother more then me, is not worthy of me, &c.* therefore sayes the Spouse, *Cant. 8. 6.* *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, and as a seal upon thine arm, let me be so united to thee, that I may never be sever'd from thee.* It is a very hard lesson, and an irksom duty for the best of men to part with friends, liberty, peace, life; all these, or either of these sweet mercies; but to part with *Christ*, nothing can perswade, or enforce the soul that truly loves him; thats a thought more cruel than the grave, witness the holy *Martyrs*, a whole cloud of witnesses; that notable and eminent *Galeacius Marquess of Vico, &c.*

Thirdly, He that truly loves *Jesus Christ*, takes abundance of delight in Communion with him. No pleasure like the kisses of his mouth, no sweetnes like that of his bosom, all his wayes are peace, and his paths pleasantnesse; *Christ* makes every condition Comfortable, there is no comfort of life, but in that little enjoyment of *Christ*, that the Soul bath in his life, 'tis *Communion with Christ*, converse with him, that is all my comfort and pleasure in the world. O how doth the Spouse take care that he be not disturbed, in *Cant. 2. 7.* *I charge you, O yee daughters of Jerusalem, by the Roses, and by the Hinds of the field, that yee stir not up, nor awake my Love, till he please.* The words are an alusion, to one that would not have her Friend disturbed, and speaks to her companions, and charges them by all that is dear and pleasant to them, not to break the rest of her best *Beloved*, and shews the wonderful delight the Soul takes in Communion with

Jesus Christ; and the special care that it always hath, that no Tentation break in, nor corruption breakout, to interrupt that sweet Communion, or occasion *Christs* departure, who will not for any profit, commit any sin, or cause *Jesus Christ* to depart from him.

Fourthly, He that truly loves *Jesus Christ*, having lost the sight of him, is never satisfied, till he come to the reinjoyment of him, is always at a lose, and is never quiet, till he enters into a fresh acquaintance and commun union with him, as in that of *Joseph* and *Mary*, they having lost their Son went seeking till they found him; So Cant. 3. 1, 2, 3, &c. *By night on my Bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth, I sought him but I found him not, I will rise now and go about the City, in the Streets, and in the broad wayes, &c I said to the watchmen, saw yee him whom my soul loveth? &c.* By all which is expressed the sedulous care and industry of a living soul seeking after Christ.

First, *By night in her bed.* *Jesus Christ* hath her bed thoughts, (i.) in her Closet and private duties; of Prayer, serious Meditations, Spiritual Ejaculations, and secret self Examinations; in all these the soul enquires. As one that loves the World, by night his Meditation is of the the World; so the man of pleasures, and honours, is pursuing his lusts in the night season; *The wicked man is contriving mischief upon his bed.* So the Soul that loves Christ his thoughts are still at work after Christ.

Secondly, *I will rise now and go about the City, &c.* (i.) I will betake my self to all publick Ordinances, and shew more zeal and life in my duties and in these will I make enquiry.

Thirdly

Thirdly, I asked the watch-men, (i.) the Ministers of the Gospel which are or should be as faithful watchmen, that watch for our Souls, and be able to speak a word in season, &c. So nothing will satisfy the soul that truly loves Christ without him; and no means shall be neglected till she enjoy Him.

Secondly, Why must he thus beloved?

First, Because he is lovely, altogether lovely.

First, Lovely in his life, observing all the will of God; there was a wonderful beauty upon him, if we behold, and can understand, that hidden glory of an untainted holiness, and Exact conformity to the will of God.

Secondly, Lovely in his death, never more lovely and amiable to the believing sinner then when he was most despicable in the eyes of Rebellious sinners. O then, he appears most beautiful and desirable, when he hangs on the Cross, there making our Peace procuring our pardon, obtaining Life and glory for us, by that shameful death.

Thirdly, Lovely in all his Graces, each Grace a matchless Jewel. Rocks of Diamonds, Mountains of Pearl, not worthy to be mentioned with the least of his Excellencies; If he put but a little of this Grace upon any soul, though he be never so vile, cloath'd with corruption; as in Ezek 16. from the 9. to the 16. verse yet may be made beautiful by his Comeliness.

Fourthly, Lovely in all his Ordinances, in which the more immediate sight the soul hath of him, the more he is taken with his Beauty; No wonder he is called in Hag. 2. 7. The desire of all Nations.

Secondly, Because of his deserving love; we

116 *The Royal Presence, or
loved him, because he first loved us.*

Consider in his love, these four particulars.

*First, He laid down his life for us, such a Love
will deserve love, and life too; Joh. 15. 13. greater
Love hath no man, then this, that a man lay down his life
for his friend.*

*Secondly, He lives now in Heaven for us, Heb. 7.
25. He ever liveth, to make intercession for them. He
is there minding our necessities, agitating our affairs,
by his sitting there, we have Liberty of coming
thither; by his sitting there in glory, we have our
standing here in Grace.*

*Thirdly, He accounts that as done to himself, that
is done to them, that are his Zach. 2. 8. He that
toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of his eye, and Mat. 10
40, 41, 42. &c. He that receiveth you, receiveth me,
and so he said to Saul Acts 9. 4. why persecutest thou
me? when he was with Commission from the High-
Priest, dragging the poor Professors of Jesus Christ to
the prison.*

*Fourthly, He longs to have us with him. John 17.
24. Father I will that where I am, there they may be
also, to behold my glory. He is not (q. d.) satisfied
without their company; and is always imparting
his most secret Counsels to them, Joh. 15. 16. Hence-
forth I call you not Servants, for the Servant knoweth
not what his Lord doth, but I have called you Friends,
for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have
made known unto you.*

*Thirdly, Because otherwise we shall not regard his
words which is intimated in the Text, If we love him,
we shall keep his words, but if we love him not, we will
not keep his words; It is want of love to Christ, that is
the cause of the abounding of every sin, for if we did
love him, we should keep his Commands, which is the
second particular.*

Secondly,

Secondly, What is it to keep the words of Christ?

First, There is a *Natural and Mental* keeping of the words of Christ, and so we must keep them, that is, *Remember his Words, his promises, Counsels, and Appointments.*

The memory is mans Storehouse, or Cabinet, that should be kept Sacred for the Truths of Christ; So the Disciples kept the word of Christ, when they remembered his sayings; and David Psal. 119. 93. *I will never forget thy Precepts, for by them thou hast quickned me, (i.) I will keep thy Precepts;* for what we forget, we lose, and what we remember, we keep; And thus, as Friends take pleasure to look sometimes on the Love-tokens of their absent Friends. So may we have singular comfort and refreshment, to see the Heart of Christ in the Counsels, Promises, and Appointments left with us.

Secondly, There is an *Evangelical and Practicall* keeping of the words of Christ. When we do believe promises and obey commands; *Promises not believed, and Precepts not obeyed, are as water spilt on the earth, besides the vessel that should receive it, Heb 4. 2. but when they are believed, they be as liquor put into the vessel for its proper use.* Hence says Christ, Luke 11. 28. *Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.* Then we keep the words of Christ, when we believe his promises, observe his precepts in all our conversation, and walk by his appointments and institutions in all our duties.

Thirdly, Why 'tis their property and duty that love Jesus Christ to keep his words.

First, Because true love is comprehensive; He that loves Christ truly loves all that is his; He that loves him that begat, loves him also that is begotten: The nearer

any thing is to Christ the better it is beloved ; and then we love the word when we keep it, as a special pledge of his love; *To have his word, and a heart to keep it is a double blessing* ; and indeed such a gift as the word of Christ is, is worthy to be loved for it self, and kept for the givers sake.

Secondly, Because true love is Operative, 'tis the principle of Gospel obedience, 2 Cor. 5. 14. *The love of Christ constraineth us*. Where there is the disposition of a Son, there will be obedience to the Fathers commands ; so where there is a spiritual love to Christ, it would set the soul on work, and quicken it to keep the words of Christ as is said of Faith *Shew me thy Faith by thy works*. So shew thy love to Christ by thy works ; as Faith without works is dead, so is love without obedience.

Thirdly, Because keeping the words of Christ gives the clearest and surest testimony of the truth of our love to Jesus Christ. *Probatio dilectionis est exhibitio operis* ; Obedience is the most lively testification of love, as Christ said to Peter, *Lovest thou me ? &c. shew it in this, in doing thy duty, Feed my sheep*. So Christ tells us in the Text, *Where the fire of love is in the breast, there the flame of duty and service is in the hands*. Joh. 15. 14. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*. in the 1 John 5. 3. *In this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments*.

Use 1. For Exhortation.

First, To a mentall keeping of the words of Christ according to that word, Heb. 2. 1. *We ought therefore to give the more diligent heed, to the things which we have received, Lest at any time we let them slip*. And that we may not forget, but keep in our memories the words of Christ.

First,

First, consider, That all the promises and counsells, which *Jesus Christ* hath made known to us, are not only for present, but for future use, *Isa. 42. 23. Hearken and hear for the time to come.* We should hear as if we were to here no more. The Cordial which hath sometime revived us, must not be laid aside, lest for want of it another time we faint quite way. The reason why they were ready to faint under afflictions, *Heb. 12, 5.* was, *because they had forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh to them as to Sons.* For this cause *Jesus Christ* often bids his Disciples remember the word he had spoken to them, and knowing their frailty, promises his spirit, *Joh. 14. 26.* and that (sayes he) *the Comforter shall bring to your remembrance.*

Secondly, consider, Not to remember the words of Christ, is a sad sign of our disesteem of *Jesus Christ*. We usually remember Precepts, Counsels, and Sayings, according to the authority which the person hath with us, from whence they come. It is a very great dishonour to *Jesus Christ*, When we shall cast his words behind our backs. Did we honour *Jesus Christ* as our King, Lord, and Law-giver, we should be more careful to remember what he hath spoken to us. We often blame our heads as if the fault lay only there, that we do not remember the words of Christ when indeed the fault lies most in the hearts, that we have not more love and esteem of Christ there.

Thirdly, The time will come, when we shall dearly repent every truth forgotten; that we did not endeavour to seal instruction upon our hearts.

First, When God shall with-hold instruction from us, because we have refused it; the time may come, when as *Amos 8. 12.* *Men shall run to and fro, and seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it; and then we shall see the worth of the word, that now we prize not.*

Secondly, When God shall call us to an account for all the Sermons, and Instructions we have received, as he will certainly do; though we forget, yet he will remember, and he will ask how we have kept and improved the word he hath spoken to us.

To help us in keeping, or remembring the words of *Christ*.

First, Let your hearts be affected with the worth and excellency of the word, that it is more precious than gold or silver: and then we shall keep it as choice treasure. That which a man prizeth, he will keep in safe custody, and have often in his eyes, as *David* sayes of the word, *Psal 119. 97.* *O how I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day long.* If a man account the word as his treasure he will not forget it, as *Jerem. 2. 32.* *Can a Maid forget her Ornaments or a Bird her Attires?* This they forget not; Yet because we account not the word as excellent and necessary as these therefore it followes, *Yet my people have forgotten me dayes without number.*

Secondly, Apply every word of *Christ* to your own souls, though men will not keep what is anothers, yet usually they keep what is their own; while men carve away the word to others as if it concern'd them not, 'tis no marvel if they keep it not, but if we accounted every word as spoken to us, and our portion, we should hear and keep it. Men remember the newes which concerns themselves. We should hear *Christ* speaking, as *Job 5. 27.*

Hear

Hear thou this, know it for thy good.

Thirdly, Meditate often upon what you have received, as *Mary pondered the sayings which she heard in her heart* The way to keep any thing safe, is to have a constant eye upon it. Meditation is the Souls serious retiring into it self, to take a view of all that of God, that is laid up within it self.

Fourthly, Hasten to do all that you have heard and learned, *Psalms 119. 60.* It is said by *David*, I made hast and prolonged not the time to keep his Commandements. A man will not easily forget his Trade; so if we daily obey commands, and believe promises given to us: which last direction leads to the second exhortation.

Secondly, It may exhort us to keep the words of *Christ* with an Evangelical and Practical keeping. Keep thy word as a man keeps his Rule or the Souldier keeps his Weapon, let not the word depart from thee, and do not thou depart from it, by forsaking the appointments and commands of *Christ*.

First, consider, That if we do not keep the words of *Christ*, by obeying, and a suitable walking, we do but in vain pretend love to *Jesus Christ*, as they that had no more of *Christ*, but to call him Lord, (*Mat 7. 21.*) Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdome of Heaven, &c. So, not every one that sayes he loves me, but he that doth my word he is my friend.

Secondly, consider what a sin it is to pretend love to *Christ*, and not to truly to love him, as to keep his words; 'tis Hypocrisie; they be *Christ's* false friends, an open Enemy is less dangerous than they, *Ezek. 33. 31.* They hear thy word but they will

The Royal Presence, or
not do them, their heart goes after their covetousness;
They be false to themselves, and delude their own
souls with a bare profession and hearing Jam. 1.
 22. *Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, decei-*
ving your own souls.

Secondly, Consider what judgement they incurre,
and who can tell how great it is? 'tis call'd a beat-
ing with more stripes, when the least stripe from
that hand can break the loynes, Luke 12. 47. *He*
that knoweth his Masters will, and doeth it not, shall
be beaten with many stripes.

Secondly, consider, This is the clearest evidence
of our interest in Christ, of his love to us, that
we keep his Commandments. By this we know
that we have him as our Christ, when we do not
only love him as a Jesus, a Saviour, but obey him
as Lord, and follow his Law. When God shall
write his Law in our hearts, Is not this an evidence
that Christ is ours?

Thirdly, Great and many are the encourage-
ments which he hath promised to them that keep
his words. There be many blessings in the word,
but they only have the blessings for theirs, who
keep his word, Jam. 1. 15. *Who so looketh into the per-*
fect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, he being
not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this
man shall be blessed in his deed; he shall ask what he
will, and have it, John 15. 7. *If you abide in me, and*
my words abide in you, ask what you will, and it shall
be done unto you.

That we may do the words of Christ.

First, Let it be the aim and intentions of our
souls, when we come to hear, to turn hearing in-
to doing. Say as Paul did Acts 9. 6. *Lord what*
wilt thou have me to do? and *Cornelius,* Acts

10. 33. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Secondly, Beg of God to give you such a heart, that you may not only say, as the people in a good humour, once to Moses; *All that thou shalt speak unto us, that will we observe and do*, but find your hearts such as in *Deut. 5. 29.* *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, &c.* It is he by whom the word is made (as James hath it) *16. 14.* *A fruit-bearing word.* Begin all your hearing with prayers, and conclude them with prayers, because it is of the greatest concernment.

Lastly, A use of comfort.

First, If we keep this word, the word will keep us. It will keep us in the worst of times, yea at all times, *Prov. 6. 22.* *When thou goest, it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest it shall keep thee, and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.* If you keep his Commands, his Commands will keep you; If you keep his Promises, his Promises will bring you to Glory.

Secondly, If we keep his word, we shall not want present Comforts. The present gratuities which we have from Christ, should be enough to encourage us, if there were no future reward, *Psal. 19.* *In keeping of them there is great reward.*

Thirdly, Jesus Christ hath promised a blessedness to such persons; they be a blessed people, *Rev. 1. 3.* *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things which*

are written therein ; and so in Luke 11. 28. *Blessed are they &c.* and with the best of blessings doth he crown them in the Text, *My father will love him, and we will come to him, and wil make our abode with him* which is the second observation.

God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his word.

In which Observation we shall take notice of these three particulars.

First, How God and Christ do make their abode with them that keep his word.

Secondly, Why God and Christ will make their abode with such .

Thirdly, What an excellent blessing it is to have God and Christ abiding with us.

First How God and Christ do make their abode with them that keep his word ; in which these three particulars must be shown.

1. *How God abides with his People.*

2. *How Jesus Christ abides with them.*

3. *How both God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his word.*

First, How God the first person in the Trinity, is said to make his abode with them that keep his word.

And this will be two wayes seen.

First, It is not here to be understood of his common or general presence as he is the infinite God, and being Omni-present, fills Heaven and Earth : for so he abides with all the works of his hands ; yea, so he is with them that fear him not.

Secondly, It is here properly understood of Gods abode by way of special presence, as he is a gracious Father ; therefore Jesus Christ doth first ex-
press

press the *Fathers* love, and then his abode, as the product and fruit of his love, *My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, &c.* He will come and abide with his, as a *God in Covenant* with them, therefore hath he put it into a promise, in 2 Cor. 6. 16. *I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

Secondly, How *Jesus Christ* will make his abode with them that keep his word? which will be shown also, *First*, Negatively. *Secondly*, Affirmatively.

First, Negatively, It is not to be understood of a carnal or corporeal presence of *Christ* (as the *Papist* imagine) as if the flesh of *Christ* could be in all places, *whom the Heavens must contain till the time of restitution of all things*: for saies the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 16. acknowledging, *If he had known Christ after the flesh, yet so, he knowes him no more.*

Secondly, Affirmatively, He makes abode with his people after a spiritual manner, *God the Father* makes his abode with his Servants, as a Father to them; *Jesus Christ* abides with them, as the Head of his Church, as it is in Eph. 5. 23. *He is the Head of his Church, and the Saviour of his Body.* *God* abides with us in *Christ*, *Jesus Christ* abides with us by his Spirit.

A learned Author shews four ways of *Christ's* abode with Believers.

1. *Politice ut Rex in Regno*, As a King in his Kingdome; and so he gives Laws as the only Head, and King of his Church: protects them, and order all their affairs.

2. *Oeconome ut Pater in Domo*, As a Father
in

in his House; and so he takes care, and makes provision for his people, as a Father doth for his Family.

3. *Ethicē, ut ratio in homine*, As reason in a man, which is the light that directs man in all his actions; so *Iesus Christ* directs and leads his people.

4. *Phisicē ut Anima in Corpore*, As the soul in the Body, which animates and acts the whole man, without which the body is a dead, & lifelesse Trunck; so *Iesus Christ* doth quicken our souls, by whom we have spiritual life.

And that he is the Head of his Church, and thus abides with them.

First, consider, He hath all grace and life in him *Iohn 5. 26. As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son, to have life in himself; therefore the Psalmist saies Psal. 36. 9. With thee is the Well of life, and in thy light, shall we see light.*

Secondly, From him is all grace and life conveyed out unto us, *Iohn 1. 16. of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace. Yea, whatsoever we receive from the Spirit of God, we have from him originally, as in Iohn 16. 15. for he shall take of mine and shew it unto you.*

Thirdly, How God and Christ are both said to make their abode with them that keep his word.

And this I shall shew to be three ways.

First, by their special Providence and Inspection with them, and so we may see them in several Scriptures, abiding with them, as in *Zach. 1. 8, 9, 10. ver. there's Iesus Christ among the myrtle trees, which represent the Church, and in Rev. 1. 13. He is there in the midst*
of

of his Golden Candlesticks, and David tells us of his experience of Gods presence with him, *Psal. 73. 23. I am continually with thee, thou upholdest me with thy right hand,* and the Apostle Paul, *2 Tim. 4. 17. The Lord stood by me;* Indeed the eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and he hath said, he will not leave them.

Secondly, They make their abode with them in the gospel, and gospel-Ordinances, where these be continued in their power and purity, there the Tabernacle of God is among men, and when these are taken away, *I-chabod*, the Glory is departed; We may say God hath forsaken us. As the Ark was a Type, and Token of Gods special presence with the Jews, so the gospel, and gospel-Ordinances, are a signal Token of Gods abode with us, for in these we may see him, in these, we may enjoy him, by these, we may be made like to him, as in the *2 Cor. 3. 18. But we all with open face, behold as in a glasse the glory of God, and are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

Thirdly, They make their abode with them in the Spirit, which proceeds from the Father, and the Son; So they may both be said truly to abide with us, while we have the Spirit the Comforter which proceeds from the Father, and the Son, as a pledge of their love, *John 15. 20. When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the father, I will send him says Christ, even the spirit of truth, which* πνεῦμα τὸ ἀληθὲς πορεύεται, which proceeds from the Father, there is an ἐκπορεύς, a Procession of the Holy-ghost, from the Father, and the Son, to the People that keep his word; and thus Believers are said to hold fellowship with the Father, and the Son, in the *1 Epist. of John 13. It is by*
the

the Spirit we are drawn; being drawn, we come; being come we are enabled to walk with God and Christ. It is this Spirit that doth all for us. As in the Echo, The aire being moved by the voice, returns the same sound by its own motion; So in all our Communion with God and Christ, the soul being moved by the Spirit, returns answer, by vertue of the Spirits motion in us; Come, says the Spirit, I come says the Soul, being taught by the same Spirit.

All the works wrought on the Souls of men, in order to salvation, are wrought of God and Christ in us, but by the spirit; As in these three special particulars.

First, By the spirit they instruct and teach; The spirit is an enlightning spirit, a spirit of Judgement and of burning. The spirit reveals the Counsels of God, the great Misteries of the Kingdome; Leads into all truth, makes men wise to Salvation.

Secondly, By this spirit they quicken and comfort the Souls of men, Rom. 5. 5. It is by the spirit that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Our cold and frozen spirits are warmed and made fit for action: and by this spirit we are awaken'd; hence the Church prays, for the breathings of this Spirit, Cant. 4. 16. Awake, O North-wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.

Thirdly, By this spirit they do strengthen, and establish the hearts of men in the wayes of holines; thus they are made strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, strong to resist tentations; strong to suppress corruptions; strong to perform duries, by this spirit they are carried through all difficulties; by this spirit their Infirmities are healed; they

healed: they are made to persevere, and kept steadfast, and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; and sealed up to the day of Redemption.

Thus God and Christ do make their abode with them that keep the words of Christ, till they come to make an everlasting abode with them in Heaven.

And according to the workings of this Spirit more or less in the hearts of men, God is said to be present or absent from his people.

Secondly, The reasons why God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his words.

First, Because of their special love to, and care of them that keeps his words. Indeed all the care of God, is concerning his people that he hath in the World, therefore in the second Commandment he is said to shew mercy to thousands of them that fear him, and keep his Commandments; that do not cast his words behind their backs, and forsaking his appointments, follow their own inventions: So that if we faithfully keep his word, he will abide with us in our work. And this is the great reason in the Text, My Father will love him; Not but that he loves his Elect from Eternity, but he will manifest his love to them, and therefore he will make his abode with them, as the people of his love, for in Deut. 32. 9. The Lord's portion is his people, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance, and in Mat. 3. 17. they are called his Jewels, and men will abide with their Treasure.

Secondly, Because of the near relation that is between God and Christ, and them that keep his word. That is a very full place of Scripture for this purpose, Mat. 12. 50. Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother. What nearer relation can there be than this? So near are they to Jesus Christ that keep his

word, observe his will, and be true and faithful to his appointments; and sure such near relations will desire cohabitation on both sides.

First, God and Christ are said to stand related in a *Paternal relation*.

Secondly, They are said to stand related in a *conjugal relation*.

First, God and Christ stand in a *Paternal relation* to his people.

First, God is their Father, and they are his Sons and Daughters. And this the Church doth acknowledge in *Isa. 63. 16*. Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, thou O Lord art our Father, &c. And with this the Lord comforted mourning *Sion, Isa. 49. 14 & 5.* But *Sion* said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. But God says, Can a woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee on the palms of my Hands, &c. My abode is with thee.

Secondly, *Jesus Christ* is their Father, *Isa. 9. 6*. The everlasting Father. Therefore he promiseth his Disciples in this, *Joh. 14. 18*. I will not leave you, orphans, or Fatherless children. He is the most affectionate tender hearted Father, *Tam Pater nemo, tam pius nemo*; None so good, none such a Father as he, (says *Tertul.*)

Secondly, God and Christ stand related to them that keep his word, in a *conjugal relation*; and God hath laid a special command of cohabitation upon persons in this relation, The man must dwell with his own wife.

First, God is related as a Husband, and will not
God

God dwell with his people whom he hath espoused to himself: *I have betrothed thee unto me for ever, Hos. 2. 19.)* Yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgement and in loving kindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness. And in *Isa. 54. 5, 6.* For thy Maker is thy Husband, &c. For the Lord hath called thee as a Woman forsaken, &c.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is the Husband of his people, as we see in the whole book of *Canticles*. And so in *Ephes. 5.* from the 29. verse to the end of the Chapter. Now where shall God and Christ make their abode, but with their espoused ones? Doth Jesus Christ delight to lodge any where more then with the wife of his bosome?

Thirdly, Because of Gods faithful Covenant he will make his abode with them that keep his word. If we keep the word of his Patience, he will keep the word of his Promise, *Revel. 3. 10.* Because thou hast kept the word of my Patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come on all the World, to try them that dwell upon the earth. It is called a word of Patience, because it teacheth patience, and especially because it requires in all them that will observe it. And this is Gods Covenant. Now, what is the Covenant? *Jer. 32. 40.* And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me; and such a sure and infallible promise of abode, can never be violated by a God-keeping Covenant; God may hide for a moment, turn away in a little wrath from his people (*Isa. 54. 8, 9, 10, 11.*) but with great mercy will be gather them, and shew them everlasting kindness; Yea, his promise shall be as the waters of Noah, that as the waters of the great Deluge shall never cover

the world any more, so he will never forsake his people utterly. It shall be more possible for the Mountains to depart, and the hills to be removed, then that he should finally depart from *His*. The frame of the world may be disordered, but the frame of *Gods* heart towards his people can never be changed. When the men of the World think *God* hath forsaken them, he is near to them, and cannot cast off his people; He may sometimes give them up for their sins into the enemies hands, but cannot give them away: This gave the Church that confidence, in *Mica. 7. 8.* Rejoyce not against me, O mine Enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me. And this did bear the head of the New-Testament-Saints above water, *2 Cor. 4. 8, 9.* We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. And whence is it that Distress doth not follow Troubles? Despair our Perplexities? Desertion our Persecutions? Destruction our sad Dejections? Sure it is, because *God* is faithful, always with us, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, &c.

Thirdly, What a special blessing it is to a person, or people, to have *God* and *Christ* to make their abode with them.

The excellency and desirableness of this abode of *God* and *Christ* with Believers, may be seen in three particulars.

First, It is better then all outward mercies and earthly blessings.

Secondly, This will more then supply the want or absence of all other comforts.

Thirdly, All our happiness doth lie in this, *Gods* presence with us.

First,

First, The abode of God and Christ with a soul is better then all outward mercies, or earthly blessings, whatsoever. God was wont to tell his people heretofore, as in *Deut. 28*. That if they would keep his Commandments, they should be blessed in their basket, and in their store; that he would give them peace, the inheritance of Jacob, and to ride upon the high places; all goodly mercies: But now he doth encourage them by a blessing of far greater worth, *I will love you, I will make mine abode with you*. It is so high and transcendent a favour, that *Moses* prefer'd it before that goodly Land of promise, *Canaan*, the Land flowing with Milk and Honey, as appears by that passage in *Exod. 33. 15*. *If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence*. Though *Canaan* be never so desirable a good Land, yet rather let me abide in this vast-howling Wilderness with God, then go without thy presence thither. A Wilderness condition with God in the Tent, is better then all pleasures and honours without God in the Palace. Hence *David* in the midst of his Royal pomp and greatness, desired this, as the complement and perfection of all; *Psal. 101. 1, 2*. *O when wilt thou come unto me*.

Consider these two particulars.

First, That there is no beauty nor desirableness in the fairest outward prosperity, if God and Christ do not make their abode with us. If we have all the world and cannot see the abode of God and Christ on our Tabernacle, in their special Providence, in Soul-refreshing Ordinances, or by the Comforting Spirit; We may look on all, and say as *Hiram* did of the Cities *Solomon* gave him, they be *Cabul, dirty things*. If we cannot find God and Christ thus with us in the midst of our Glory, the glory is departed.

Secondly, Consider, There is no misery nor unhappiness

happiness in the worst afflictions if God and Christ be there; in the Furnace there is no Death, in Captivity no Darknes, in Prison no Sadness, in Death no Hell. Jesus Christ tells us, *he will not leave us comfortless*; he never told us we should not meet with Tribulations; but says, *In the world we shall have tribulation*, and as surely, *that in him we shall have consolation*. His people may be in the World friendless, harbourless, pennyless, but he assures them they shall never be comfortless.

Secondly, This abode of God and Christ with his people, will more then supply the want or absence of all other things. Jesus Christ, when he would thoroughly encourage his Disciples against all the hardships and discouraging fears they might meet withal after his departure, gives them this one precious Cordial, or Catholicon, in *Mat. 28.20*. *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World*; when you are cast out of the Synagogues, had before Magistrates and Rulers for my name sake, scourged, hated, imprisoned, for all these things shall they do unto you: Let this comfort you, *Lo, I am with you alway, to the end of the World*.

Indeed, This abode of God and Christ with his people, is every thing to the soul, which we may see in these three particulars.

1. Their presence is a *sanctuary and sure hiding place*.
2. It is a *sure Light and guide to them*.
3. It is a *store house and treasury of all Provisions*.

First, The abode or presence of God and Christ is in stead of a *sanctuary, or sure hiding place*, as *Psal. 84.11*. *For the Lord God is a Sun and Shield, &c.* and in *Isa. 8.13*. says the Prophet, *Sanctifie the Lord God*

of Hosts, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he shall be for a sanctuary: Do you set God before you, and he will set himself before you; and where the great God goes, there goes a guard of Angels, Psal. 34. 7. His Wings be a Covert, and his hand a Canopy, with which he hides from the storm and from rain.

And that he is a mighty Saviour,

1 Consider his Omnipotence; He can do whatever pleaseth him, He can make the worm Jacob to thresh Mountains, and the Mountains to become a plague before Jerubbabel, Zach. 4. 7. All the Nations of the earth are but as a drop of the Bucket, or dust of the Ballance, compared with him, and all hearts are in his hands: therefore says the Prophet in Isa. 26. 4. Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, or the Rock of ages. He is no broken Reed, but that strength in which we may confide. As David says, Psal. 46. 1, 2, 3. Si fractus illabitur Orbis, If the World be dissolved, God is our refuge and strength, &c. therefore we will not fear though the Earth be removed, and though the Mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea, &c.

2 Consider his immutability; We have standing comfort in the unchangeableness of this God, Mal. 3. 6. I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. And for this we have the experience of David, Psal. 9. 10. They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee, for thou (Lord) hast not forsaken them that seek thee: and the Churches experience, Isa. 63. 9. He bare them and he carried them all the days of old. This great and unchangeable Saviour saves his people these four ways.

1 He will save and preserve from evils, and will be a chamber of safety when the indignation is abroad,

to hide from the storm, Ezek. 11. 6. *Yet will I be to them as a little Sanctuary in the Countries where they shall come, I will be with thee; is Gods great Promise, and his peoples security; it was Joshua's guard, and Jeremiahs brasen wall.*

Secondly, He will save his people in afflictions; as he did the three Children in the burning Furnace, thus he delivers in six troubles, and also in seven; as tis promised in Isa. 43. 2, 3. When thou passest thorow the waters I will be with thee, and thorow the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest thorow the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. Job's experience is an everlasting proof of this, that when the Lead is consumed, the Gold is preserved in the Furnace.

3 He will save or deliver out of afflictions, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *In the midst of all temptations he will make a way for us to escape them: Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivers them out of all. He is Emmanuel, God with us, our redeemer from Hell and from trouble.*

4. He will save by afflictions, and by the evils they meet withal, Prov. 29. 15. *The rod and reproof give wisdom; and as David says, It was good for me that I was afflicted. All things shall work for good, 2 Cor. 4. 7. These afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. The Vessel is usually covered with dirt by the Clensers hand, that it may shine with the more brightness; so by afflictions God makes us partakers of his holiness.*

Afflictions and outward evils come alike to all, but with much different effect. All men fall into afflictions, good and bad, but as the Israelites and the Egyptians went both into the red Sea, and the one

was drowned, and the other passed through to *Canaan*: So the righteous and the wicked fall under calamity, the one sinks through unbelief, and the other passes thorough safety, and by faith and patience comes to inherit the promise.

Secondly, The abode or presence of *God* and *Christ* with Believers, is in stead of a sure Guide and Light unto them. They can never want a guide who have *God* with them. As the pillar of a Cloud by day, and of fire by night, was unto *Israel* in all their march: the same and more is *God* to his people in all their pilgrimage.

Consider three things :

First, Consider that Man cannot be without his guide; The best of men have very great need of the presence of *God* to lead them, that they be not misled, and that they do not faint in the way, *What can the Sheep do without the Shepherd?* Such is *God* to his, *Psal.* 23. 1. without *Gods* abode with us, 'tis as children without a father, and none to direct them, and so left to run themselves into mischief. What is the World without a Sun? *Jer.* 10. 23. *The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*

Secondly, Consider that 'tis our great wisdom to commit our way to the guidance of this *God* and *Christ*: Every wise man will commit his way to *God*, and not move a step without him; as *Moses* in the Conduct of *Israel*, would not move a foot without *God*. That was a good Petition, or rather Resolution of *David*, in *Psal.* 73. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.* I am resolved to be guided by *Gods* counsels, and an excellent and imitable practice of *Isaac* in *Gen.* 26. 24, 25. that where he had met *God* at *Beersheba*, and
where

where God had blessed him, there he pitched his Tent; so we should move as God leads.

Thirdly, Consider, that if God undertake to guide us, we shall not miscarry, he will certainly bring us safe to Heaven. Our feet may be almost gone, but shall not be altogether gone, *Psal. 73. 2. My feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh sliped.* So it may be with the choicest of Gods servants; but in the 23. verse, *Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand.*

The more dark and dangerous the times be, the more we should desire Gods abode with us; the nearer a night of trouble or of death is to us, the more earnestly beg his stay, as the two Disciples, *Luke 24. 29. They constrained Christ, saying, abide with us, for it is towards Evening, and the day is far spent.*

Thirdly, The abode or presence of God and Christ with his people, is in stead of a Treasure and Store-house of all provisions. Where Jesus Christ is, and where God makes his abode, there is a Spring-head of comforts that cannot be drawn dry, *Isa. 33. 16. Bread shall be given them, and their waters shall be sure, who have God with them.* So was God to Israel, *Dent. 29 5, 6. He fed Israel in the Wilderness forty years, their clothes did not wax old. You have not eaten bread, neither have you drunk wine or strong drink, that ye might know that I am the Lord your God.*

Consider three particulars here:

First, Consider God is such a store, that he is always full; He hath an *Antarchy* in himself, and says to his creatures, as in *Psal. 81. 10. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it; ask what you will, and there it is to be had.* There be full Treasures of temporal and spiritual good things with them, with whom
God

God and Christ do make their abode. As the Ark of God brought all kind of blessings to the house of *Obed-Edom*, so when God comes, he brings all things: *Deus meus, & omnia*; my God, and all things. When *Jesus Christ* came to *Zacheus*, he tells him, *This day is salvation come to thine house*; that is, both temporal and spiritual preservations and deliverances. Salvation doth consist in the total absence of all evil, and in the presence and possession of all good.

2. God and Christ have left with us the promises of the Covenant to live upon, till we come to the inheritance of the purchased possession: These be like the *Widows Cruse* that never fails; this like the *Manna*, will not be with-held while we be in the Wilderness, till we come into *Canaan*, to feed on the fruits of that Land, *Heb. 13. 5*. That's a sure promise, in which we may by faith see present supplies, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*; and in *Phil. 4. 19*. we may possess in that promise whatever we want; *My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus*.

3 God hath given us his Son, and *Jesus Christ* hath given us himself, as an ensuing pledge of all mercies contained in the promises, *Rom. 8. 32*. He that spared not his own Son, but gave him for us, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. He that hath not spared his Son, will not with-hold any mercies; he that hath given us the best of blessings, will not with-hold smaller mercies. He doth alway tell his people, as in *1 Cor. 12. 9*. *My grace is sufficient for you*.

Thirdly, The abode of God and Christ with Believers, is their heaven upon earth. All our happiness is in the abode of God and Christ with us.

First,

First, Consider it is a wonderful mercy of the great God, that by his common providence, he is with the works of his hands, which is mans safety; and David admires at this, *Psal. 8. 4. Lord what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?*

Secondly, Consider it is a mercy of the greatest worth, and to be for ever admired, that God and Christ do not only visit us by common providence and inspection, as his creatures, but make their abode with us as with children and friends. O this is our glory, God doth not come with a short visit, for a day, for a few days, *but makes an everlasting abode.* The Church complained when she thought God was departed, because he had been with them, and made so short a stay, *Jer. 14. 8. Why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the Land, and as a way-faring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night, &c.* but when she remembered the covenant of eternal abode, she comforts her self in the 9. verse, *Yet thou O Lord art in the midst of us.* To be ever with the Lord is all we can hope for, and it is mans contemplative happiness, to converse in his thoughts with that glory.

First, Consider Jesus Christ hath promised this as our great glory and full reward, *I will take you to my self, they shall behold my glory. 1 Joh. 3. 2. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

Secondly, This abode with God and Christ is the highest opinion and aim of all the people of God. This was Pauls pressing, in *Phil. 3. That he might attain to the resurrection of the dead, (i.) the state of them that are risen, and with God and Christ; therefore resolves after a long debate with himself, Phil. 1. 21. To be with Christ is best of all; and David in Psal. 73.*

at the latter end, professes, *He had none in heaven but Gods, and there was none upon earth that he desired in comparison of him.*

Use. First of Lamentation, and laments three sorts of persons.

First, Let us lament such as be without God and Christ in the world, all ignorant and ungodly persons; yea, this is the sad case of all the sons of Adam ever since he sinned, and lost communion with his God, they be brought forth into the world with their backs upon God, and with Gods face against them. What was Cains grief? how was his heart hurried into a world of inconceivable distempers, and distracting thoughts, when he must be turned out of Gods presence, from the enjoyment of God in his Ordinances? Gen. 4. 14. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day, (says poor Cain) from the face of the earth, (but this is as nothing) and from thy face shall I be hid, (and now where is my comfort and safety?) it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. Such persons be as Lambs in a large place, Hos. 4. 16. Without a Keeper in their most plentiful state; What hope have such to escape Hell and Destruction?

Consider these two particulars:

First, Consider it is a very sad case, when God and Christ withdraw or depart but for a moment; 'tis a sad and intolerable moment, as we see in the complaint of Christ when God withdrew himself from him, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and in the example of David, Asaph, and Heman, in Psal 77. and Psal. 88. and the whole Church laments, in Jer. 14 8.

Secondly, Consider if God and Christ do never come
to

to make their abode with us here, we are never like to make our abode with them hereafter, and then it were better we had never been born, *Psal. 73. 27. They that are far from thee shall perish.* And this is Hell, to be separated from God and Christ, *2 Thess. 1. 8, 9.* They, (i.) the Wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. It is *Heaven* where ever God is in his special abode, and that is *Hell* where he is not present in his mercy and grace.

Secondly, 2. of Lamentation.

Let us lament over a worse sort of men, and they be such as in *Job 21. 14.* that say to God, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways:* that refuse the word of Christ, and be weary of God and his Ordinances, and so reject God, as if one house could not hold them both, as the people in *Ho. 30. 16. 17. Who say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesie not, &c Cause the Holy One to trust from before us.* They that stop the mouths of them that speak the word of Christ, or turn away their ears from harkning to that which is spoken, say in effect, *Let God be gone, let Christ depart from us.*

1 Consider what an evil frame of Spirit it is for men to refuse the presence of God. Was there ever wickedness like this? that the great God should be as an *unbidden guest* with his own creatures, and have no better entertainment then Christ with the *Gadarens*, who besought him to depart out of their Coast, yea, which is far worse, *rejected*, as Christ was by the possessed in the Gospel, *Mar. 8. 29. What have we to do with thee? art thou come to torment us before the time?*

2 Consider it will be a very terrible day, when God and Christ depart from such persons. God threatens

threatens it as a sore judgment upon *Jerusalem*, *Jer. 6.8.* *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee:* When God departs, in comes all judgments, for it follows in the Text, *Lest I make thee desolate;* Desolation comes as soon as God is gone; yea, says the Lord, *Hos. 9. 12.* *Woe to them when I depart from them.* And though he depart from such by removing his *Counsels, Gospel, and Ordinances:* He will still be with them in judgment; when he is far from their *Affections*, he will be nigh to their *Consciences*; then he will shew his terrour and his wrath: and then they shall find that as there is not a sweeter promise than this, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;* so not a more terrible judgment than this, *I will not love thee, nor abide with thee.*

Thirdly, Use of Lamentation.

Let us lament our selves, who have had God and Christ making their abode with us for many years in their special *Providence, Gospel-ordinances, &c.* Yet we have not improved so glorious a *Presence*, so rich a mercy: especially we have cause to lament this four-fold neglect.

First, That we have so little acquainted our selves with God and Christ, so little prized and observed their presence with us, that we have learned no more of God and Christ, but are yet strangers to them; so that Jesus Christ may say to us, as in *Joh. 14. 9.* *Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me,* Philip; so he may say to us, *Have I been so long time with you in my Providences, Ordinances, and by my Spirit, and yet have you not known my goodness, my faithfulness, my name, my laws and ordinances?* Sure it is with most of us, as with Jacob, *Gen. 28. 15, 16.* The Lord was with him, and he was in his dream; and when he awaked, he said, *Surely the Lord*

Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. So God hath been with us, but we have been in a dream, or in a sleep all this while; but when God shall awaken us, we shall say with him, *God was in this place, and we knew it not.*

Secondly, We may lament our selves that we have so little conformed to God and Christ. God hath been with us, but we have refused his company, as *Eph. 2. 12.* *And had our conversation as without God, and without Christ in the World.* O when God and Christ shall depart from us, it will be a heart-breaking to us, and we shall dearly repent the least miscarriages.

Thirdly, VVe may lament that we have not lived more upon God and Christ, to trust in them, and depend upon them for life and salvation, and made him our *Counsellour, guide, and strength,* and lived upon his All-sufficiency; we have not made them our *sanctuary, our treasury, our happiness,* though they have been with us, *in whom are all things.* Yet have we lived at so poor a rate (as to our spiritual comforts) as if we had been under the *Hypocrites* curse, *Job 20. 23.* *In the fulness of his sufficiency he is in straits.* Or guilty of that vanity mentioned in *Ecc. 6. 2.* *To have Riches and Honours, &c. and not a heart to use them.* To have a God and Christ, in whom are all *Riches and Honours,* and have had no *Faith* to use them for our comfort, we have even starved ourselves at the fullest Table, and Spring head of plenty.

Fourthly, VVe may lament our selves, that we have not taken more pleasure in the enjoyment of God and Christ in the *Gospel, and Gospel-ordinances;* accounting all company and delights, solitariness, in comparison of the joy and comfort that is in the abode of God and Christ; especially when God expects we should

should rejoyce in him, and hath promised to abode with such, *Iſa. 64. 5. Thou meetest him that rejoyceeth, and worketh Righteousness, and Remembreth thee in thy ways.*

Two Uses of Exhortation.

1. *To get the Presence of God and Christ with us*
2. *To endeavour to keep God and Christ abiding with us.*

The first Use of Exhortation.

Let us be exhorted above all desires, to desire Gods presence and above all getting, get God and Christ to make their abode with you. O with what Ardency and heat of desire, doth David expresse himself; *Pſal. 27. 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the House of the Lord, all the dayes of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple; and so in Pſal. 42. 1. 2. As the Hart pants after the Water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God, My Soul thirsteth for God, when shall I come and appear before God? O when wilt thou come unto me? and in a multitude of suchlike Pathetick breathings after God.*

And that we may the more earnestly desire this mercy, the abode of God and Christ, with us; consider three particulars.

First, Consider, the presence of God and Christ, is the special favour and honour that God bestows only upon his own people. By this was Israel distinguished from all the world, Exod. 33. 16. My presence shall go with thee, and in the last verse of the last Chapter of Ezekiel It is the Church only that is call'd Jehovah Shammah. The Lord is there her Founder, Preserver and Governour.

Secondly, Consider, that they have God and Christ with them, dwell continually at the Fountain

Head of Consolations, as *David* sayes *Psalm 23*. *I shall want nothing, the Lord is my sheapheard, My Cup runs over. Surely goodnesse and Mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. This fountain keeps our Cisterns full; our Channels run shallow sometimes, but never are they dried up, Hos. 14. 6. I will be as the Dew unto Israel; He shall grow as the Lillie, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon they shall grow up as Lillie, beautiful and fair, and as the Cedar well rooted and established; He that hath the Sun hath Light, He that hath the Well must needs have Water; Ille possidet omnia qui possidet possidentem omnia; He hath all things, who hath him from whom all things come.*

Thiraly, Consider, that when all Comforts leave us, God will not; when friends forsake, and Riches profit not, in the evil day, *God is a present help in time of trouble*, and loves to shew himself in *Dubiis & Arduis*, in the greatest difficulties, and on the Mount of straights. *Jesus Christ* sayes truly to us, what *Peter* said rashly to him; *Though all forsake thee, yet will not I.*

Object. I have found God and Christ, gone from me, sayes the soul when I have had need of him.

Ans. First, That God and Christ may and do sometimes hide their faces from their dearest friends.

Secondly, Though God and Christ do sometimes withdraw from us, yet every interruption of Communion, is not a separation; The sun doth not cease to be, when it ceaseth to shine. Grace may suspend its acting, but doth not loose its being, God will not finally forsake his People.

Thirdly, God hath very many gracious ends, why he sometimes withdraws; And they are alway in
mercy

mercy to his people, *sad providences, producing sweet effects.*

Directions and helps, how to get the presence of God and Christ with us.

First, Repent and humble your selves, because of all your sins, that you have at any time rejected the Counsels of God, and refused grace and mercy, and neglected Opportunities, of doing your souls good and drawing near to God; *Repentance and Resolution against sin, come like John Baptist, to prepare a way, and a place, for God and Christ to come to, and make their abode in.* Of the Hearts and Houses of Impenitent sinners, we may well say *God is not there.* The way to have God to turn in unto us; is to turn away from sin, as Ephraim, Jer. 31. 18, 19, 20. He bemoaned himself, and repented, and God came to him as to his dear Son, and to his pleasant Child.

Secondly, Believe in *Iesus Christ*, and by faith get an interest in him: It is by faith onely that we give entertainment to *Iesus Christ*: It is by *Iesus Christ* alone, that God and Man come together. *No man hath seen the father at any time but the son, and he to whom he doth reveal him, and he that hath the son, hath the father, Rom. 5. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace. with God.*

Thirdly, Own *Iesus Christ* in all his Offices, as your King, Priest, and Prophet.

First, As your King, Let him have the Sovereignty of your souls, that he may rule over you If Christ be your King, God will be your Father: God loves to come, where Christ hath his Throne.

Secondly, As your Priest, That his Righteousness may give you the advantage of Communion with God: without which we cannot come

near to him, and he will not come near to us.

Thirdly, As your Prophet, That he may shew you the way; If his spirit be your guide, and his Word your Rule, you may be sure his Promises shall be your Portion, even this Promise in the Text, *They will come to you, and make their abode with you, even God and Christ.*

Fourthly, Seek earnestly after God and Christ, in the use of all appointed means, till you come to see, and enjoy their presence with you.

Here shall be shewn these two particulars.

1. *Where we may seek God and Christ.*

2. *How, or after what manner we must seek them.*

First, Where we may seek after God and Christ.

First, We may find them in the Works of Creation; these will represent God and Christ unto us, the Power and wisdom of God and Christ, by whom the World was made; *In omni re aspectabili quaedam extant vestigia Dei*; In all the visible creatures, there be some prints of the invisible God so that he which lives altogether without God, must needs be *πνευματολόγος*, without excuse, having God so near to him.

Secondly, We may find them in the Word, 2 Cor.

4. 6. The glory of God shines there in the face of Jesus Christ, and to them that are conversant in the Word, God hath promised to reveal him self, *Isa. 66. 2. To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.* And the Apostle gives this direction, *Rom. 10. 6. 7. Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into Heaven? that is to bring Christ down from above; or who shall descend into the*
deop

deep? that is to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? *The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of Faith which we preach.*

Thirdly We may find them in prayer *Jam. 4. 8.* Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. If you will be strangers to the duty of Prayer, to the Throne of grace, God will be a stranger to you; he hath promised to draw nigh to them that draw nigh to him; and so in *Exo. 20. 24* *In all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will blesse thee.*

Fourthly, We find them in our Communion with the People of God. Where two or three are met together in my Name, there will I be (saies Christ) in the midst of them. Therefore Jesus Christ directs us to go up by the foot-steps of the Flock; and they enquire wisely, *Cant. 6. 1.* that say to the Church of Christ *Whither is thy beloved gone, that we may seek him with thee?* and when the two disciples went to *Emmaus*, communing of Christ, He came and joyned himself with them.

Secondly, How, or after what manner we must seek God and Christ.

Take these four following Directions.

First, - *Affect your selves with the worth and excellency of this presence of God and Christ; carry a high esteem of them in your hearts; think with your selves, how safely they are Immured; how Encastled and Provided for, who have God and Christ with them; as the Prophet said to his servant, There is more for them, than can be against them* *Isai. 33. 16.* *their place of defence, is the Munition of Rocks, &c.* O what sweetness and satisfaction have they within with whom

God and Christ abides | as the *Sponse* doth exprets it, *Cant. 1. 3.* *Because of the savour of thy good Ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the Virgins love thee.* Thy Name of *Mercie, Wisdom, and Faithfulnesse*; how doth this refresh their hearts, that have the presence of *God and Christ*? O sweetness and satisfaction beyond expression! and then conclude, *Si tantus quarentibus: O quantus possidentibus*; If he be so good to them that seek him, how good is he to them that enjoy him.

Secondly, Labour to affect your souls with the great want and need that you have of the presence of *God and Christ*; while men think in their hearts, they can be well enough without *God and Christ*, they will never seek after them, but say as in *Jer. 2. 31.* *We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee, (i.) We have strength enough of our own, we need no more of thy support; and thus David brings in the wicked, priding themselves, in Psalm 10. 4. The VVicked through the pride of his countenance (as in the Original, through the pride of his Nose) will not seek after God.* God is not in all his thoughts, when these proud *Laodicean spirits* will not seek, the poor, hungry, desolate soul, that sees a need of *God and Christ*, find them.

Thirdly, Quicken your selves to much diligence in seeking. The Prophet complains, *No man stireth up himself to seek the Lord.* It is a business of the greatest concernment, and must not be attended with a cold indifferency, but as one set on by a true love, and where that is, *Non quiescit amor, sed querit amatum*, Love will be restless in the pursuit of the thing, or person beloved. See with what heat men seek the world, with much more heat seek *God and Christ*.

We must do as the woman that had lost her *Groat* ; she lights a *Candle*, sweeps the house, seeks diligently ; so we must let up the *light of the Word*, and to work with the *besom of a serious repentance*, and through reformation, and diligently enquire. Thus *David* with a very vigilant eye, seeks him whom his soul loved, *Psa. 132. 4. 5. I will not give rest to mine eyes, nor slumber to my eye lids, till I have found out a place for God, &c.*

Lastly, Resolve with your selves never to give over, till you come to the perfect and full enjoyment of them. As *Job* said, *I will wait all the days of my appointed time*. So do you seek all the days of your appointed time : If we would find *God* ; and *Christ* we must seek all the days of our lives. They that will find what they seek, must seek till they find ; As *God* in the *Creation*, did not rest till he had made *Man*, so *Man* should not rest till he hath found *God* ; And as in the *Redemption*, *Jesus Christ* did never cease seeking, till he had found all the *lost sheep of the House of Israel* ; so we should never give over, till we have made *God* and *Christ* our own.

This should be the work of our lives, and upon this work I must leave you.

‘For now I must tell you, That (perhaps) you
‘ may not see my face , or hear my voice any
‘ more in this place ; yet not out of any peevish
‘ humour, or disaffection to the present Authority
‘ of the Kingdom (I call *God* and *Man* to witness
‘ this day) it being my own practice and Coun-
‘ sel to you all, To Fear *G O D* and Honour
‘ the *K I N G* ; but rather a real dissatisfaction
‘ in some particulars imposed to which (not-
‘ withstanding all endeavours to that purpose)

' my conscience cannot yet be espoused, *Wherefore,*
 ' I hope, in this, and in all my abode with you, I
 ' may say (*without ostentation*) with the *Apostle* in the
 ' 2 *Cor. 1. 12.* Our rejoycing is this, *The testimony of a*
 ' *good Conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity,*
 ' *we have had our conversation in the world, especially*
 ' *to you wards;* And as he said in *Acts 20. 26, 27.* So
 ' I take you to record this day, that I have endeavoured
 ' to be pure from the bloud of all men, for I have not
 ' shunned to declare to you, the whole counsel of God, both
 ' by my *Life and Doctrine:* because I knew this very
 ' well, that (as one sayes) *Snadet loquentis vita, non*
 ' *oratio:* that the Preachers life is the most lively
 ' preaching.

' I shall onely adde this (*my friends*) That though
 ' my lips be sealed up, that I may not speak from God
 ' to you, yet I shall not cease to speak to God for you,
 ' as ever I have done; And though I cannot have
 ' you in my eye, yet I shall lodge you in my heart;
 ' And asking nothing of you, but your *Prayers,* shall
 ' hope to meet you daily at the *Throne of Grace,* and
 ' and that at last we may enjoy one another in *Hea-*
 ' *ven.*

' And because they say, *The word of a Dying man*
 ' *make the deepest impression,* before I am altogether
 ' *Civilly dead,* I shall give you one *Exhortation* more.

Secondly, let it be your endeavour to keep God
 and Christ with you, that they may make their abode
 with your hearts and houses, that what ever you lose,
 you may not be undone.

In the General.

1. Take heed you do not slight or abuse his *Provi-*
dences.

2. Do not Despise or neglect his *Ordinances.*

3. Be sure you do not grieve his *Spirit.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Observe more particularly these ten directions which I would leave with you.

That God and Christ may make their constant abode with you,

First, Endeavour to please God and Christ, and to walk as the Gospel commands, in all *Well-pleasing*. And for this purpose, observe these three rules.

1 Entertain God and Christ like themselves. Now they are come to you, say as *Salomon* did of his Temple which he had prepared for his God, *The Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee, much less this poor Tent*; so with the most humble frame of spirit, admire his greatness, and infinite condescension, for he is the *King of glory*, as in *Psal. 24.* and so give him suitable entertainment, for he will dwell with the humble and contrite spirit. If *Elizabeth* wondered at the visit which *Mary* gave her, with a *Whence is it that the Mother of my Lord is come unto me?* then admire that the Lord himself should come, not onely to visit your hearts, but to make such a gracious abode with you. And as the Centurion said to Christ in the Gospel, *I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof.* So acknowledge your unworthiness of so rich and unparallel'd a grace, that God and Christ should come in unto you, to abide with you.

2 Wait upon God and Christ with all readiness of mind, to observe every intimation of the will of God to you. Stand always ready, as servants wait upon the hand of their Master, saying in your hearts, *Lord, What wilt thou have me to do? or, What wilt thou have me to suffer?* It is the frame and posture which Christ commends to his Disciples, *Luke 12. 35.* *Let your loyns be girded about, and your lights burning, to do his Will, as it is done in heaven.*

3 Take pleasure and delight in the company
and

and society of God and Christ above all the pleasures in the world. Do nothing without first calling God and Christ into the action. Remember this in these four cases especially.

1 Pray God and Christ along with you into all your spiritual duties, that you may be sure to perform them all according to the mind of God. None knows better what will please God than himself; do not enquire so much what others say, but what God appoints; 'tis not what this or that man says, how we must serve God, but what God says himself; as *Augustine* said to the *Manichee* in another case, *Nec ego te, nec tu me, sed ambo audiamus Apostolum*; so hear what God and Christ say to us, as to the performance of all our duties. If we will entertain God and Christ and have their company, we must set before them such savory meat as they like, lest we be like them, *Mat. 15. 9.* of whom Christ says, *In vain do they worship me, &c.* and our service be like theirs, of which the Lord said, *Who hath required these things at your hands?* O what was that great evil the people were guilty of, for which there comes that heavy judgment, *Psal. 78. 60.* *He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the Tent which he placed among them.* Sure it was some great guilt, in the former verses we find it to be their *Hypocrisie*, *Apostasie*, and *Idolatry*, any taint of this kind, will make the jealous God forsake our solemn meetings.

2 Pray God and Christ into all your civil affairs. The *Greeks* *καὶ οὕτω* with God in their entrance upon every work, was a commendable practise. It is reported of *Publius Scipio* the *Roman*, that he would always go first to the *Capitol*, & then to the *Senate*; so we should begin our civil employments with spiritual duties; and do as *Abrahams* servant, when he was to take

take a wife for his Masters son, he took God along with him : and thus to abide with God, is to have God to abide with us. Therefore says the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. 20. *Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called :* and in the 24. verse, *Brethren let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God,* and God will abide with him.

3 Pray God and Christ to your Tables at your eating and drinking, *for man doth not live by bread only.* If these be guests at your Tables, you must needs have cheer enough ; there is more sweetness in a morsel with them, then in all dainties without them, and then you may be sure also your Tables shall not become a snare unto you. *Theophrastus* reports of the *Heathens*, that they did first *Suey* and then *eva-lazeu*, they did first sacrifice, and then kill, lay on their meat, entertain and eat. And it is the Apostles rule, seeing all things come of God through Christ, that God and Christ should not be unbidden guests, but as in 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

4 Pray God and Christ along with you in Morning when you rise, and at Evening when you lie down : visit him Morning by Morning, and Evening by Evening, this is the way to have a prosperous day and a safe night. *David* took this course, *Psal. 4. 8. I will both lay me down and take my rest, for thou Lord only makest me dwell in safety.* And this gave *Jacob* such a pleasant dream, *Gen. 28.* that having God with him, he was all night within view of heaven.

Secondly, Love God and Christ above all, and then God and Christ will not depart from you : for he shews mercy to thousands of them that love him, and hath made over Himself, and Heaven, and All, to them that love him. It is reported of *Ignatius* that his

his Love was such to God and Christ, that he had the name of Christ *Cordi eius insculptum*, graven upon his heart. It is such a Heart love that He requires; for He is a jealous God, and will have all our Love.

If we love any thing better,

First, It will steal away our hearts from God; And

Second. It will take off the heart of God from us, so that God and Christ will set themselves against us.

Third. If we would have God and Christ to make their constant abode with us, *Delight in the Society and Fellowship of the People of God, with whom they dwell*. Never be ashamed to converse with them, whom God and Christ do own for theirs. The Apostles argument why we should entertain Strangers, in Heb. 13. 2. (*because thereby some have entertained Angels unawares*) is but mean and inconsiderable to this Reason, why we should entertain and own the Saints of God; for thereby we are sure to entertain Christ; as in Mat. 25. 40. For this cause the Gibeonites made a League with Israel; for we have heard that God is with you. And their is a promise in Zech. 8. 23. That Ten men out of all Languages shall take hold of the skirt of a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we heard that God is with you, Mal. 3. 16. They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned, and heard it, &c. He was with them, and indeed, God dwells in the Tabernacles of the Righteous.

Fourth. If we would have the constant abode of God and Christ, with us, Let us keep our selves clean from sin, our Hearts pure, Consciences undefiled, and as the Apostle says void of Offence towards God and towards Men, very careful not to sin against God; and very circumspect not to Sin against Man; that

that this may be our Comfort, that the world must needs say of us, as they did of *Daniel* that *they could find nothing against him, save in the Law of his God* as in *Daniel* 6. 5, Whatever others do beware of sin, Say as *Joshuah*, *I and my house will serve the Lord.* Watch against sin; Choose any Suffering, rather than the least Sin.

Consider in that choice two particulars.

First Consider in all your sufferings God will be with you; but in any of your Sins he will not abide with you; as in the Example of *Israel*, *Exod.* 32. 27. *When the Calf was got into the Camp, God forsakes the Host of Israel; When Saul forsook the Lord, the Spirit of the Lord forsook him.* That was an excellent Saying of *Azariah* the son of *Obed* in the 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. and Oh that all *England* could hear it! Hear thou me *Asa*, and all *Judah*, the Lord is with you while you be with him; If you seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you,

Second. Consider, 'Tis an Act of high presumption, reflecting much upon the Purity and Holiness of God for men to imagine that God will own and prosper them with his presence, while they go on to do wickedly, in their Whoredomes, Drunkenesse, Blasphemy, and all manner of Prophanesse; which God can no more own, then disown himself. So they foolishly promised themselves Peace, *Deut.* 29. 19. *though they walk in the imagination of their hearts, and add Drunkenesse to thirst;* But the Lord will not spare, but his anger and jealousie shall smock against them, till he hath brought them down from their high Mount of a Sinful and Carnal confidence. Therefore the Prophet reproves that wicked people, *Mich.* 3. 11. where the Judges, the Priests, and the Prophets were corrupted. Yet they say *Is not the Lord among us,*

none

none evil can come upon us, therefore shall Sion be ploughed as a field, &c. as Abner said to Joab, This will prove an evil thing, and a bitter in the latter end; as Galen says of Meats, *Qua dulcia sunt facile in bilem & amaritudinem convertantur*, sweet meats generate choler and corrupt matter: so sin that is a sweet morsel now, will be shame, death, and hell at last.

Fifthly, With an humble acknowledgment of former barrenness under Gods gracious presence with you, resolve and endeavour to be more fruitful. God never left his Vineyard, and pulled up the hedge, and commanded the rain not to fall upon it, in Isa. 5. till it became barren, or did bear corrupt fruit. The exil'd Confessors in Queen *Maries* days, confessed that (as *Ursin* says in the Preface to his Catechism) the cause of their present suffering was their former barrenness and unprofitableness under the Gospel. And a sad example of this is *Jerusalem* over whom Christ laments, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou, &c. if thou hadst known in this thy day, &c.* but now they are hid from thine eyes; and when once a people grow up to this heighth to reject the Gospel, then expect some fearful judgement. Read the last Chapter of *Chronicles*, the second Book, and at the 16. verse, and then you will see when the wrath of God is like to break out upon a People without a remedy.

Sixthly, If you would have the continual abode of God and Christ with you, let God have all your thoughts, let him be your meditation, this is the way to have the best company when you be alone. *David* would meditate of him day and night, and professed the meditation of him should be sweet to him.

Here

Here consider two particulars.

1 Consider, that no place, state, or condition, can hinder the soul of this way of secret communion with God and Christ. This priviledge could not be denied to a benighted *Jacob*, to an imprisoned *Jeremiah*, to an exiled *John* in *Patmos*, by this (says *Jerom*) *solitudo fit Paradisus*, a man may turn a *Wilderness* into a *Paradise*; and therefore weread in *Cant. 1.1.12* how the Spouse invites *Christ* to go with her, as *Isaac* did into the fields to meditate, *Come let us go into the Fields, and lodge in the Villages.*

2 Consider, In these secret silent visits of the soul, God and Christ do take abundance of delight. Our *Night* thoughts, our *Field* thoughts, our *Closet* thoughts, are very welcome to them: yea, when we can do no more but think of God, our very thoughts shall be an accepted service, *Cant. 2.13. He loveth the Fig tree that putteth forth her green Figs.* The ripe fruit is in the bud; so holy endeavours in pure breathings and desires God accepts, when our infirmity, or the iniquity of the Times may be such, that we can do no more.

Seventhly, If we will have God and Christ to make their constant abode with us, then let us walk humbly with God. *He that beholds the proud afar off will be nigh to them that humble their souls under his mighty hand, Isa. 57.15.* Thus says the high and lofty one that inhabits Eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the High and Holy place with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit.

God hath two Heavens in which he dwells,

1 His glory dwells in the high and holy place, in Heaven above.

2 His grace dwells in the humble and lowly spirit. Here will I dwell says God,

Eight-

Eightly, If you would have the constant abode of God and Christ with you, be sure to look to your hearts, that you walk in your uprightness; be true to the Word of God, be true to your profession. There is not in the world a more lively representation and Image of God, then the heart of the upright; therefore God loves so much, when he hath drawn his likeness upon them, to walk with them; therefore David resolves, *Psal. 101. 2.* I will walk in the midst of mine house with a perfect heart; O when wilt thou come unto me? This was the comfort of the Apostle, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, he had his conversation in the world; God will be with such, and such shall be with God, *Psal. 37. 37.* Mark the perfect man, behold the upright, the end of that man is peace; And thus God appointed Abraham to walk, that he might be with him a God in Covenant, *Gen. 17.* Walk before me, be thou perfect; and gives him this encouragement, I am God All-sufficient: Gods All sufficiency being sufficient to keep the Soul upright, being rightly improved.

There be two things which usually Bias the Soul a way from God, and makes it warp from its holy principles,

1. The Frowns.

2. The Flatteries of the world.

Against both which, there is sufficient remedy in the All-sufficient God.

First, That which often perverts the Soul from the truth, is the fear of troubles and wants, If I keep my integrity, (saies the Soul) I shall be Undone, I shall Lose my Estate, Embroyl my self in many Troubles: perhaps a Prison, Exile, or Death comes next. But what force is there in this Tentation? If we hear on the other hand, God saying, if thou wilt be upright fear no troubles,

troubles, no wants, *I am a God All-sufficient*, as in *Job 22.25.* to the end of the Chapter, *The Almighty shall be thy defence* (then fear no force) *thou shalt have plenty of Silver, thou shalt gather gold as dust; and the gold of Ophir, as the stones of the Brooks, then fear no wants.*

2 There is another thing in the world that hath a very great influence upon the spirit of a man, to pervert him, and turn him from his integrity; and that is *the hopes of preferment, and greatness of the world*: But this is but a poor bait, if we look upon the *All-sufficiency of God*. Doth the World promise thee riches? God will out-bid the World, and gives eternal riches. Will the World give Pleasures? God will give better; with him is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. Will the World give Gold? God will give Diamonds. Will the World give all its glory? God will give thee the glory of a better World, rather than that shall be a share unto thee.

Ninthly, *Pray much, pray continually*; God will be in the hearts and houses of his *Praying people*, when he hath a curse in store for *Prayerless Families*, in *Jer. 10.* the last verse.

And especially pray for these two things.

1 That God will abide with you and the Kingdom in his *Gospel* and pure *Ordinances*; and that you may dwell in *Beth-el* and not in *Beth-aven*, a house of vanity and grief. Pray that God will not remove his *Candlestick* from you, nor utterly extinguish the light of the Kingdom.

2 Pray, and I shall pray with you, That God will give you a faithful Pastour after his own heart,

heart, not according to your hearts, that he may teach you by his *Doctrine* and his *Life* too. A faithful Teacher, to go *in* and *out* before you, to shew you the *Word* of the Lord; One that may be among you, as it was said of *Athanasius*, that he was *Magnes & Adamas*.

1 *Magnes*, As a *Leadstone* to draw your souls with a gentle hand and melting heart, from your sins *Heavenward*.

2 *Adamas*, As an *Adamant*, of an invincible courage and zeal against all sin and prophanities; one that will not spare sin. That he may save your souls.

Pray that God would give you a *Star*, a *Star* out of his right hand, not a *churlish Orion* that brings a cold, barren, and cloudy Winter, but a benevolent and friendly *Pleiades*, that there may be many Sons brought into God, and your souls may find a continual Spring, & that you may be as *Trees* of Gods own planting, and may flourish in the Courts of the house of our God, and may bring forth more fruit in old age.

Tenthly, and Lastly, If you would have the constant abode of God and Christ with you, *Conform*, *Conform* universally, and fully to the Gospel of Christ; *Consent* and *Assent* unfeignedly to all the Truths and *Doctrines* thereof, that you may walk worthy of God, and all that grace which hath been revealed to you: for Christ hath said, *If a man keep his word, the Father will love him, and both Father and Son will come to him, and make their abode with him.* Wherefore I shall conclude this *Exhortation* with that of the Apostle, in *Philippians* 1. 2. 7. *Only Let your conversation be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent*

sent from you, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one minde, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.

And so shut up all with that in Acts 20.32.

And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Mr.

Mr. Selater's Farewel Sermon.

1 John 3, 1. & 21.

Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God, and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him. Little Children, keep your ſelves from Idols.

THis general Doctrine I have already delivered unto you from this Text, which indeed is the marrow and ſubſtance of the whole Chapter: That goſpel-believing is a Duty, which they that really perform, are highly privileged by, to their greateſt advantages: I have ſpoken concerning goſpel-believing, and that it is a duty and that they that do really perform it, are highly dignified, and privileged by it, as hath been made to appear from the Chapter; that which remains to be done, and ſhall be, as God enables the work of this morning, is, to make improvement of this Doctrine, which is one of the moſt material and momentous Doctrines that can be preached to us. Goſpel-believing it hath moſt precious privileges entailed upon it; whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, that Jeſus is the Son of God, that Jeſus is come in the fleſh, is born of God, knowes God, and ſhall be eternally bleſſed of God, and with God; ſurely then, the word runs upon a very great miſtake. I have hinted ſomething already to that purpoſe, but I have left the more full diſcuſſion and diſcovery of the matter untill now. Why, who is there among the generality of common profeſſors, that is not very pregnant to hold forth this to be their faith? if ſo be that it ſhould be
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put to the question, Friend what is your Faith, what Belief are you of? why not one in a thousand, I think, but will be apt to say, Why truly I will give you this account, There is a gospel which is preached among us, and in the world, and this gospel doth hold forth this for true Doctrine, that Jesus the Son of *Mary*, that was born at *Bethlehem*, is the Christ, the Messiah which was promised by the Father, & which the world did live in expectation of so long; this Jesus I believe is the Son of God, this Jesus I verily believe is come in the flesh, and he is come to be the Saviour of the World; this is the belief, & that which is the common profession that is made by the generality of people. Why but will you consider now this Text, and other Scriptures do speak fully to this purpose, *Whosoever doth believe this, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that he is come in the Flesh, whosoever believes this, is of God, is born of God.* And it doth clearly appear, and may be most convincingly made out, that many thousands that profess their belief concerning these things yet notwithstanding are not born of God. Why certainly there must needs be a great and gross fallacy in the business; Gospel faith and believings, it is not so common a thing as many takes it to be; & therefore if this be gospel faith, and that which doth interest persons in such great & precious priviledges, truly it concerns us to look well to it, that we be not mistaken concerning this belief. Now this I would say, there is something in it to be considered, with respect to the time wherein Christ appeared visibly to the world, & the after times, wherein the Apostles did hold forth these great Doctrines of the gospel concerning Christ. And this we are to say, that in such a time as that was when this was the critical point as it were, the discriminating things in such a time for any to make this

profession, & to hold forth this to be their faith and belief, that *Jesus is the Christ, the son of God*, it was of high signification, and might very well, as to man, beget a comfortable confidence and hope concerning such persons, that certainly were born of God, as to man, and according to rational charity, it might be very comfortable that such persons as did thus believe, and profess this to be their faith & belief, there were some blessed beam upon their souls; for mark you, it hath been thus in the world, & among the people of it, concerning matters of God & godliness, that there hath been such and such a truth, that hath been the critical truth, as I may so say, the *Shiboleth* whereby people are distinguished one from another. I allude to that passage in *Judges* concerning the *Gileadites*; they made a profession of themselves to be such and such, and they were put to it to pronounce *Shiboleth*; they that could not speak out the word, & clearly pronounce it they were not judged to be the persons that they professed themselves to be; but they that could do it, held their liberty: so sometimes such and such a Doctrine is ordered out to be a distinguishing point, upon the account of the desperate opposition that the world makes again it, and upon this account the Priests, and the Rulers, & the rest of the world were desperately bent against *Jesus* they called him *Jesus*, but could not endure him to be called *Christ the son of God*; it was an Act and Decree amongst them, that whosoever should confess *Jesus* to be the *Christ* should be put out of the Synagogue, should be excommunicated. Now for persons at such time, wherein it was as much as their liberty, it may be their lives were worth, to own that *Jesus Christ was the son of God*, for persons now at such a time to own this *Jesus* that was in so man a condition, to be the *Christ*, there is very much in it, infinitely more than for persons

now to take up this profession why? because this doctrine hath obtained in the world, and it is a doctrine among Pa-stors as well as Protestants; there is no such danger now for persons to be of this belief. But shall I say this, that for all that, to believe this really, according to the right account, and true genuine interpretation of Gospel-believing the case is the same with them and with us at this day, setting aside the consideration of times and time; the danger then, and the encouragement now, the case is the same; Gospel-believing of these truths according to a genuine interpretation of Gospel-believing, it is the same now as then, and then as now: And therefore we must consider, and look further. I would put these few things to your consciences: You profess this to be your faith *you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God that he is come in the flesh; these you profess to believe*, and if you do so indeed, you are highly privileged people, blessed of God, and shall be to all eternity; but do you not mistake? do you believe this, *that Jesus is the Christ?* How came you by this belief? What account can you give of it? How were you brought over to this belief? did you not come to this faith and belief, by common report? you were born to this doctrine; you look upon it as that which is the benefit you have by your being born in a Nation, and among a People that profess the Name of Christ, and this hath been instilled into you by education, and upon this account you take it: *Did you ever buy this truth? It is a truth that Jesus is the Christ, how came it to be yours? did you ever buy this truth? buy it? I say buy it?* For the very truth is, we are never able to make out a good Title to any Gospel truth, untill such time as we can say *we have bought it*: How? why, by serious meditation, studying the Scriptures, searching into them seriously, pondering & weighing

them crying mightily to God, that he would manifest them to us, and encountring temptations from without, from within; being at a point willing to engage liberty and estate, and life, and all for this truths sake. Can you say, we have pondered, and are so fully satisfied about it, if all the world should come in a way of contradiction, and rise up in opposition to us & come with fire & sword to beat us out of this truth, yet we are resolved to stick to it? Can you give such an account of your selves, that you have not taken it up upon a common report, but are able to say there hath been an inward Revelation made of these things to your souls, that there hath been a sanctified work of the Spirit upon your understanding, that you come to see into the mystery of these gospel-testimonies? Is there an habitual frame of Spirit wrought in you, whereby you are carryed out to close with every truth of God, and to close with it upon this account, because of a divine authority stampt upon it? when we give assent to common truths, but not with a common spirit, but in the strength of an inward conviction, we assent to it upon the account of an union that we have received from the holy one; & we assent to this & that truth upon the account of a divine authority which we see to be stampt upon it, & with all we find that there are suitable workings of our heart in the loves, desires & delights of them to these truths (as there will be a kindly working of the heart where there is a right assent suitable to the truths assented to) as if there be a threatening, the Soul assents to it, & will tremble before God: If a promise be made, or a gospel-revelation, it will be accompanied with a holy rejoicing in God, that ever he should make such a promise or Revelation: and then there will be a holy resolution of Spirit, Come what will come, I will never part with this truth; I have bought the truth, that was my duty;

duty; and having bought it, I will never sell it; that is my duty too: can we give such an account as this? but then wishal let me a little further improve that which I have already spoken from the Chapter.

You say this is your belief, *That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*: but can you give an account of those privileges that are entailed upon this belief? for you must know that the privileges which belong to such, will serve as evidences that they are such.

Now if you believe it is your privilege to be born of God, and this being born of God must be the evidence of this belief; can you give an account of your being born of God? If you are not born of God, you do not believe that Jesus is the Christ. Can you give an account of your overcoming the World? are you such as are enabled to stand out in opposition to the errors and heresies, and corrupt doctrines and practices that are in the World? can you bear up against the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life? if you are in slavery to the world, in bondage to the beggerly rudiments of the world, you are mistaken that *Jesus is the Christ*? for he that believeth according to a true interpretation of Gospel believing, *that Jesus is the Christ, doth overcome the world*, and by vertue of this belief *he is enabled to get a conquest over the world*, and over the corruptions that are in it through lust.

And then again, *You profess to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*: Oh, but are you able to give an account that you have believed into this Jesus, and upon this Jesus? for that is it the text holds forth, *He that believes that Jesus is the Christ, doth believe on Jesus the Christ*. Are you by vertue of this believing which you profess, drawn out to a *closing with Christ*? do you roun| your selves upon him? own him for righteousness and

and salvation, and are willing to yield *your selves up in subjection to him?* you believe *Jesus to be the Christ;* but do you believe on that *Jesus* whom you profess to be the *Christ?* Now this being thus laid down as a foundation, I would infer thus, and so go on to a farther branch of this application: *either you do really believe with a Gospel-believing these truths and doctrines concerning Christ, or you do not:* why they that do profess they do, but in truth they do not: there is a clear and manifest contradiction which this profession meets withal, and that upon the accounts I have formerly given, as alas this profession suffers contradiction generally, generally the professors of this faith, *that Jesus is the Christ,* do clearly make a flat contradiction; and I am very confident that there are thousands that if they should be put to the trial, will not stick to this truth? if you do it shall cost you the loss of your liberty and estates, nay, your life shall go for it. Oh, I am very apt to think, that you shall have thousands that will turn their backs upon this profession, renounce this profession. Now concerning such, this I would say,

1. That the conditions of such persons as are not right in *Gospel-believing*, is a most mournful and miserable condition; however it may be with them in other respects, yet it is sad to think what a condition they are in; for consider first of all, they that do not perform this great duty of *Gospel-believing*, according to the truth and reality of it, I will tell you what they do, *they do give God the lye*, they do by interpretation tell God to his face, *that he is a very liar:* and what higher blaspheming can there be, then to give the *lye* to the *God of truth?* every one will be apt to bless themselves, and say, *Oh, far be it from me!* God forbid that I should be charged with such a horrid impiety as this! Oh but Brethren, the very truth is, it is a very common

common thing by interpretation, to give the lye to God; and all that do not believe according to that gospel, believing that you have heard, do tell God to his face that he is a lyar. How doth that appear? Why take a little help, such as I am able to give you, To profess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that he came to be the Saviour of the World, is ordered out to be our righteousness, is sent of God to preach liberty to captives, to heal diseased souls, and to deliver poor creatures from the bondage of the Devil; these things people generally profess to believe, but mark you now, they never come to Christ, nor never set in with him upon this account, and to this purpose, O Lord, thou art the Jesus, the anointed of God, I come to thee for life, I am a poor dead creature, I am in a state of unrighteousness, and thou art given to be for righteousness; Lord I flee to thee for it, I am a poor diseased creature; the plague is upon my soul, and thou art appointed to heal the soul of the plague, I come to thee for healing. There is not one of thousands that come thus to Christ. Will you now see how the lye is give to God? I profess for my part, saith one, I know no such matter, Jesus is the Christ, and I profess to believe so, and he is appointed of God for such and such things, he is sent to preach liberty to the captives, I know not that there is any such bondage, Christ came to save sinners, alas, I know no need of any such salvation by him; he came to heal diseased souls, I am well enough, what need have I of Christ? what is this but to give the lye to God? He that receives not Christ, makes God a lyar; for he doth in effect say, Lord thou sayest so and so concerning the World, I know nothing of all this; and so the lye is given to God. And is it nothing to give the lye to the great God, the God of Truth? and I tell you, while you profess this Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God and
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in the mean time flie not to him ; you believe him to be the Son of God, and that all authority is given unto him, and you will not subject to his authority, why you give the lye to God, and is this nothing ?

2 Consider the sad condition of such as believe not according to a right *Gospel-believing*, they are such as are liable to the dreadfulest touches from the Devil that can be ; *He that believeth is born of God, overcomes the World, and is enabled to keep himself, that the wicked one doth not touch him with a mortiferous touch ;* but I tell thee whatever thou art, that art under the power of unbelief, thou art in danger of a dreadful touch from the Prince of darkness, & if thou livest & diest in a state of unbelief, thou wilt fall under the power of condemnation. I remember what our Savior speaks, and consider well of it, *You stand out in opposition to my Doctrine, but I tell you, Except you believe that I am he, you shall die in your sins ;* a dreadful word, *you shall die in your sins,* and what then, *be damned eternally ;* this is the condition of all such as are in a state of unbelief. But then on the other hand, in case we be able to give a good account of our believing *that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,* and of our believing on him concerning whom these testimonies are given, Oh, what cause have all such to rejoyce in their condition ! the condition of such persons is happy beyond all expression and comprehension, that have owned these truths, owned that Jesus of whom the faithful testimonies are given.

Now all the Chapter, according to that account I have given you, comes in to the purpose of comforting and rejoycing the hearts of such persons. Here is your comfort now, really believing according to a right interpretation of *Gospel-believing*, this is your priviledge, you are the persons that are born from above, you are the persons that shall be enabled to o-

vercome the world, to bear up against all opposition that Men and Devils can make against you; you are the persons that have the witness within you, and you shall be able to bear up against all the contradictions of sinners; you are the persons that have Christ, and have eternal life by him; you shall have it, nay, you have it already, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath eternal life: he hath it in the beginnings of it, and shall have it in the compleat state of it; being brought over to Gospel-believing, you may come with boldness to God in a way of prayer, with holy confidence that whatever else you ask believing, you shall have a good account of it; God doth not neglect any believing prayer of a believing soul: and all the priviledges of the Gospel are entailed upon you, and you are entituled upon them, you shall have the benefit of them while you live, and when you die unto all eternity. Well it may be said of such a person, blessed is he and she that hath believed with a Gospel-believing Gospel truths and testimonies concerning Christ, and on Christ, on whom those testimonies are given, for there shall be a full and perfect accomplishment of whatever God hath spoken with his mouth concerning such.*

And lastly, If the grace of God hath brought us over to a closing with Christ of whom these truths & testimonies are given, why the last branch of the application is but this, That you would but justify the believing, & labor to manifest the reality of your believing, according to the Gospel, by a suitable walking: this is that that shall be the closing up of this application.

Oh brethren, Let us consider well, our Saviour tells us in *Mat. 11. Wisdom is justified of her Children.* Why if ever we mean to approve our selves to be Wisdomes children, our care must be for to give our justification of Wisdomes sayings, and for to car-

tie it in a congruouſneſs, and ſuitableneſs to that Goſpel believing which we profeſs to be by grace brought over too. Why, but what is that you will ſay? Why, conſider the Text, and ſee what remains of the Chapter. I will make it out, give it up to you in this way.

Why, Firſt of all, this one ſpecial duty that lies upon you, That you would ſtudy your mercy, and know what God hath been to you, and done for you, and how highly you are dignified, and not to be always in a fluctuating ſtate, and upon the queſtioning and diſputing point, but to come to ſome well-grounded confidence, that you may be able to ſay, We know that this and that is our condition, and this and that is our dignified priviledge that we are planted under.

Do but mark how the point in hand doth charge this upon us, in the 13. verſe of this Chapter, *Theſe things have I writ to you that believe on the Name of the ſon of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.* Here is your duty according to what the Text it ſelf doth charge upon you If you be ſuch as by grace are brought over to a Goſpel-believing, the Apoſtle *John* that did write this Ep. ſt. and ſi from it, preach unto you in the name of the Lord, and by authority from him, that this is your duty, to know that you are perſons that have eternal life, that you are ſuch as Chriſt by his blood hath made a purchaſe of eternal life for; that he hath by his blood once for all entered into the holy place that is not made with hands, that he might prepare for you, and that you might have the poſſeſſion of theſe bleſſed *Mansions* that he hath made preparation of. Eternal life it is yours, & you may be bold to claim it, & you are bound to hope & rejoyce in the expectation of the full enjoyment of it, and not to be always upon the

the question, and disputing point, but to go on with a holy confidence towards God according to what the Apostle expresses, 1 Cor. 2. *We know that when this Earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, we shall have a House not made with hands, &c.*

But then, a second thing that I have to charge upon you, is this that you would acknowledge with all thankfulness and enlargedness of heart to God the riches of his mercy, and grace to you; that hath been pleased to cull you out of an unbelieving world, and bring you over to the Gospel, & to the participations that are by Christ, according to the Gospel: Oh! this you should set your hearts upon, by admiring the riches of Gods grace; and say, *Lord, why should'st thou manifest thy self to me, and not to the world! That many thousands should live & die in the total ignorance of Christ and the gospel mysteries, or else live and die in an empty profession; and yet that God should be pleased to pitch upon me!* This is that that the Text doth hint unto us in v. 19. of his Chapter. Oh! saith he, in a triumphing manner *We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in wickedness:* Oh! our mercies, and the riches of grace that hath appeared to us, while the whole world lies in wickedness, is put into the malignant one, lies in the Devil, for he the malignant evil one, while the whole world lies in the Devil in malignity! Oh! It is a sad condition, infinitely more sad than for a man to lie in the most noisom'st stinking ditch, or in the loathsom'st kennel; why this is that that heightens the mercy to poor souls that are called by grace according to the purpose of God, that while the whole world lies in wickedness, and so are I ke to lie; yea, & to lie in Hell to all Eternity, that God should please to lay you in the bosom of his Son, and to take you into the arms of his mercy: this is that that should heighten

heighten our thankfulness. I may make use of that expression which we find in *Acts 4.* when *Paul & Barnabas* came unto a company of *Heathens*, and they saw what great things were done by them, and took notice of the gracious spirit that they discovered, sure say they, *The gods are come among us in the likeness of men.* Considering the state of times, & what a height of wickedness many at this day are grown up unto, the dreadful swearing, blaspheming of God and his ways: truly judge of it your selves, whether we may not say the *Devils* are come among us in the likeness of men. Why how! oh How should we heighten our love and thankfulness to God, that should please in free grace to bring us over to close with *Jesus Christ*. But then fourthly, As many are brought over to gospel believing, this is your duty to study, & endeavour what you can your advantages in Faith: And so the Apostle gives it in charge here in the Chap. ver. 13. *These things have I writ to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the Son of God.* This is that you should set about. If God hath brought you over to a closing with *Christ*, and an embracing of the testimonies concerning him, believe more and more, labour for your advancement, and let it be your Prayer, *Good Lord increase our faith*: Labour that you may be clear in your apprehensions of gospel mysteries, and that you may be more strong in your adherence to *Christ*, of whom those gospel testimonies are given & that you may not onely come to have an adhering faith, but to an assuring faith that you may not be like waves tossed and tumbled up and down, but that you may come to be rooted and established, & grounded in your faith that you may not come to be unsettled by *Heresy*, corrupt *Doctrines*, or the *Apostasy* of others, but that you may be steadfast and unmoveable.

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Yet further fifthly, This is to be given in charge to such as doe believe according to the Gospel, that they carry it suitable to a believing state, as in those particulars that I have insisted upon; so in a deportment congruous and suitable to the priviledges which belong to believing: You are born of God; carry it as men and women that are so indeed: What! born of God, the sons and daughters of God! What! and not live according to God? and not study conformity to God? I remember what he spake there concerning Ammon, *How is it, that thou being the Kings son, art lean from day to day?* How is it, that we that professe to be the sons and daughters of God, are lean and lank, not more improved? That we do not shew forth God, and expresse Christ? This lies in the beginning of the Chapter, *If you be born of God, remember that you be born of him that is the God of Love: And therefore you are to manifest this birth, and your believing, and your being born of God, by loving God, and by loving them that are born of God; He that believeth is born of God, and he that loveth him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him.* The God of Love doth beget a people of love; a loving God, a loving people; And this is that that you should expresse your believing by, and your Adoption by; by the love you bear to God, and the children of God.

A hateful spiteful spirit, where it doth discover it self, speaks those persons not to be born of God, but of the Devil; carry it as believers, as persons of God, by studying a conformity to God, and by keeping his Commandements, subjecting your selves to his Authority; not living according to your own lusts, but according to the Laws and Rules which God hath given you saith the Apostle here, *This is the love of God; that ye keep his Commandements.*

It is not a love in Word, and in Tongue, but in Reality ; a love discovering it self by a conscientious care to hold conformity to all the Will of God ; and if any should object, This is a hard saying, who can bear it ? saith the Apostle, No such matter, there is never a believing Soul will say the Commandments of Christ are grievous or burdensome ; no, they are light to them that are brought over to the Faith of the Gospel.

And the last thing I have to charge upon you, upon the account of your Gospel believing, and being brought over to a closing with Christ, it is this, and so upon the matter I have given you an account of the substance of this pretious Chapter, having reduced it to that general Doctrine I propounded before ; I say the last thing is this, That you would walk suitable to a believing state, by being very careful concerning your Worshipps that you do perform, that they be according to God, and according to the Gospel ; and this is that which the Apostle closes the Chapter withall, in the 21 Verse, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols, Amen.* As I take it, in the former Translation it was *Babes, Babes keep your selves from Idols* : here it is *Little Children.* I observe in this Epistle the Apostle makes a distinction of Believers into three Ranks, as you shall find in the second Chapter, *I write unto you Little Children, I write unto you Young-Men, and I write unto you Fathers* ; in the close of the Epistle, he concludes with this *Charge to Little Children,* I forbear to dispute ; but sure I am, it is a duty lies upon one and other, whether they be Babes or Young Men, or Aged Fathers in Christ ; whatever our rank and condition be, I am sure of this, This is a great Duty that lies upon all that will approve themselves in godliness, and to be brought over to the Faith of the

the gospel, that they look to their Worships, and that they take heed of Idols; as if he should say, he that is born of *God*, he keeps himself that the wicked One doth not touch him. Oh *Little Children*, shew forth that spiritual Ability that by grace you are furnished with all, by being able to keep yourselves from Idols.

It might be said, What is this to us? Are we in danger of Idols? True, well might the Apostle give in such a charge to them in those times, when the greatest part of the world were in a state of Heathenism, and in estrangement from Christ, and the mysteries of the gospel; but this I say, it doth really concern Christians in gospel-times, that have had the breakings out of the gospel-light, and the knowledge of gospel-mysteries, to be careful of this charge, that they keep themselves from Idols; there were the Idols of the Heathens; grant it, and so still there are a generation of people that our Souls should mourn over to consider their state, that are wrapt up in ignorance of *God*, know nothing of the true *God*, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is the state and condition of the Jews at this day; and what a sad condition are they in! grant it that they do not worship Idols after the manner of the Heathens, yet they worship not the true *God*; because they worship not *God* in Christ; for saith the Apostle, *Whoever sins, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, he hath not God: He that abides in the Doctrine of the Christ, he hath the Father and the Son*; And so the Jews at this day, they not abiding, not owning the Doctrine of Christ, they have not *God*, because they have not the Father and the Son: this is their condition, And thus, I say, there were not only the Idols of the Heathens. Oh! but sadly be it spoken, there are Idols among persons pretending to Christ, and gospel saith, and the Doctrine concerning grace by Jesus Christ.

How many Idols and Idolaters are there ? I might tell you, the Covetous person is an Idolater, the Voluptuous person, and the Selfe-justiciary sets up his own Righteousness, and Idolizeth that : But I say this there are Idols among Christians : Papists hold forth the Name of Christ, but yet what woeful Idolatry is there among them ? There was the Dragon-worship in the time of the Heathens, and in the room of that, there is come up the Beast-worship, and of that worship the generality of the world runnes upon : and it concerns us to keep from Popish Idolatry, it being the grossest Idolatry that ever was, because there is the fairest pretence of worshipping *Jesus*, and yet they turn him into an Idol. What else means their worshipping and bowing to Images, their breadden Gods, and the like ? Oh ! therefore it concerns us to keep our selves from Idols : And there is a Scripture, if it were but well studied, would cause trembling of heart, and make all that have any care of their soules, to look about them ; that Scripture I refer you to, it is *Rev. 13.* compared with the 20th. In *Revel. 13. 11.* whereas before there was Dragon-worship, it is said here, *I beheld another Beast coming out of the Earth, and he had two Horns like a Lamb, and he spake as a Dragon, and he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the Earth, and them that dwell therein, to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed :* Now look at the 8th. Verse, saith he, *And all the dwellers upon Earth shall worship him, whose Names are not written in the Book of Life, of the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World.* Oh ! It is a terrible word, and that that should make us to fear and tremble, lest in any kind we should be drawn in to the worship of the Beast ; for as many as were not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, they were drawn

drawn into the worship of the Beast. This is that that should make us keep our selves from Idols, from whatsoever hath but so much as a tincture of Superstition and Idolatry; and the rather, considering that other Scripture in the 20th. of the *Revelation*. and the last Verse, *And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire.* All that are not written in the Lambs book of Life, are prevailed to perform the Worship with the Beast, and not being writ there, must be tumbled into the Lake for ever.

This therefore concerns us, to keep from Idolatry, from whatsoever hath a tendency that way, and that hath any tincture of Superstition upon it; and consider with your selves, that our duty is in matters of Worship, and in things concerning the Worship of God, to see to it, that we keep a humble dependance upon God, that we walk not according to the will of men, but according to God; *Ye were bought with a price, be not Servants of Men.* We are to walk by a Line, by a Plummert, and what is not warranted by the Word of God, or maintainable by Arguments drawn from it, we should not close with.

And for the closing up of all, do but consider how this Chapter, and the things that I have spoken to you, and preached from it, how they do all influence this Exhortation, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols*: see to it that you approve your selves in holy Worship to God, and the Lord Jesus. Doe but argue thus, You profess to be Believers; and is it not your duty to answer to this profession? Your Faith is a pure Faith, and an obedientiall Grace; it is a grace that will Tutor you to hang upon Christ, and his appointments and Institutions; and therefore being Believers, study to keep your selves from Idols; and

whatever is not consonant to the will of God concerning Worship.

You believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; keep your selves from Idols in this respect: for he is come into the world, and hath shewed the pattern of his House: and then you are born of God: carry it like a people that are born of God, that are high born, and credit your holy Profession, by keeping a dependence upon that God of whom you are born: And then being believers, you are born of God, and have overcome the world, and therefore shew forth your Heroick Spirit, by standing out in opposition to Idols, and whatever is contrary to sound Doctrine, and the power of godlinesse.

You have an Unction from the holy one, and this engages you to look to it, that you keep your selves from Idols; *And when we know (saith he) that the Son of God is come, and hath given us understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is even in his Son Jesus Christ.* And thereupon he brings in this, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols:* as if he should say, this is the true God, God in Christ, Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, this is the true God, and he hath eternal life with him; other Gods are false Gods, and what benefit will you have by following them, and performing worship to them? Nothing but eternal death: false Gods can bestow no eternal life upon you; but this is the true God, and he can give you eternal life; and therefore, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.*

And now yet one word more. I would not occasion any discomposure of Spirit that is not becoming you; but this I must say, for ought I know, you have the words of a Dying man, and we use to say, that the words of Dying men they are apt to make somewhat a deep

deep impression : I mean a Dying man, not in properness of speech according to nature : and if it should be so, I hope there would be cause of rejoycing on my part ; But I speak the words of a Dying man in respect of Ministerial Office.

I suppose you all know, there is an A&t come forth by Supream Authority, and it is not for us to quarrel at all, but to submit to it, and hold correspondency with it, so far as we can with a good Conscience ; and there being many Injunctions, that many, besides my self, cannot comply withal, therefore we are willing to submit to the penalty inflicted.

This I say, you have for many years had the benefit of my poor Labours ; I have fulfilled near up towards 40. years, and have performed my service to God, Christ, and his People, and I bless his Name, not without acceptance and success. My work, so far as I know, in this course, as in the Weekly course, is now at an end : my Desire is, that you whose hearts have been inclinable to wait upon God in the way of my Ministry, may be kept faithful to God, and that you may have the blessing of the everlasting Covenant coming upon your souls, and that you may have the power of this Doctrine, held forth in this Sermon, put forth upon your hearts ; that as you do believe that Jesus is the Christ, that Jesus is the Son of God, that as you profess these things, you may carry it suitably to your profession, that you may walk in love to God, Love to Christ, and Love to one another ; that you may labour to manifest a noble, generous Spirit in overcoming the World in Errours, Corruptions, false Doctrines, and unwarrantable Worship : that you may in all things labour to approve yourselves : *And little Children, keep your selves from Idols, Amen.*

The Farewel-Sermons of John Gaspine
 Minister of the Gospel, preached at *Ash-*
priors in the County of *Somerset*, the
 two last Lords daies before *Bartho-*
lomew day 1662.

LUKE 12. 32.

*Fear not little Flock for it is the Fathers good pleasure
 to give you the Kingdom.*

IN this Chapter we have the summe of a precious Sermon which our Sayiour makes to his Disciples in the presence of the multitude. In which we have,

1. Several cautions in the first twenty verses of that Chapter.

2. Some Exhortations, from thence to the end of it.
 The Cautions are these :

First, to beware of Hypocrisie, in the three first verses, *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*, which is Hypocrisie; and the motive wherewith he backs this Caution, is this, That all things shall be opened and made known hereafter, how closely soever they may be carried, and how secretly soever their sins may be committed here. Men may think to varnish over the fowlst of their actions by fair and plausible pretences, and so to hide their iniquities from the eyes of God and men; but they are much mistaken, for *there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid that shall not be known*, Vers. 2.

Secondly, he warns them to beware of timorousness
 and

and fearfulness in publishing his Gospel, from the beginning of the 4 verse to the 12. I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that they have no more that they doe can; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear, fear him who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; I say unto you fear him.

Thirdly, he cautions them to beware of Covetousness, and this caution of his was occasioned by one that desired Christ to speak to his brother to divide the Inheritance with him, *vers. 13.* Upon this Christ takes occasion to caution them against covetousnesse, *vers. 15.* And he said unto them, take heed and beware of covetousness. And that he might set out the folly of this sin of covetousness, he doth elegantly set it forth by a Parable of a rich man who was coveting after more and more of the world, and was casting, plodding and contriving how to pull down his barns and to build greater; and how to encrease his estate in the world, when God said unto him, *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, and whose then will these things be which thou hast provided,* from *vers. 15.* to 20.

Having given them these Cautions, he proceeds to give them several Exhortations, as to seeking after the Kingdom of God, to giving of Alms, to watchfulness against the coming of Christ to judgement, and several other duties which I shall not now insist upon.

The Text containes that Exhortation of Christ wherein he exhorts them to undauntedness and resolution in the waies of God. *Fear not little flocke, for it is your fathers good p'easeure to give you a Kingdom.* The words may be divided into these two parts:

First, here is an Exhortation.

Secondly, the reason of this Exhortation,

First,

First an Exhortation, *Fear not little Flock* : in the which here is,

1. A very loving Compellation, in the words το μικρόν πλῆθος *little flock*,

2. The Exhortation it self, μή φοβῆσθε *fear not*.

In the reason of the Exhortation, viz. *for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdome* : we have these things considerable.

First, Here is your *Donor, Your Father*.

Secondly, Here is the *Donum* or gift it self which God will bestow upon his people, and that is *the kingdome*, which is ment the Kingdome of Heaven.

Thirdly, The persons on whom God will bestow this Kingdome, and that is *You, you my little Flock*.

Fourthly, The manner of Gods bestowing the Kingdome of Heaven upon his little flock; and that is by gift, *it is your Fathers good pleasure to give*, &c.

Fifthly and Lastly, The motive that prevails with God to give the Kingdome of Heaven to his people; and that is his own good pleasure; *it is your Fathers good pleasure*, &c.

So that you see every word hath it's weight; here is very much profitable matter contained in a few words; and many useful and profitable Observations may be observed from it, as,

Doct. First, That Christ flock is but a little flock, a very little flock : *fear not little flock*.

Here be two diminutive words in the Original : First μικρόν, which signifies little, and then the word πλῆθος, which also signifieth a little flock; Christs flock is a little little flock, very little in comparison to the rest of the world, the number of those that truly fear God; that are sincere Christians, and that are by a true and lively faith really ingrafted into Jesus Christ,

Christ, is very small in comparison of the Profane, the Hypocrites, the Unconverted and Unsanctified; that are onely Christians by an external profession: that have onely a form of Godlinesse, but deny the power of it: *The way to Heaven is narrow, and the Gate straight, and there are but few that find it, Mat. 7. 13, 14.* There may be many that may make faire pretences to Religion and Holinesse in a time of prosperity; but there are but few that will stick to *Christ* and his holy wayes in discouraging times: there may be many Rotten Professors, but few that are found in the Faith.

2. *Doct.* That God is a believers Father, or that every sincere Christian is a Child of God, and hath God for his Father; it is saith *Christ* to his Disciples *your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdome.*

3. *Doct.* That every true believer is interested in the Kingdome of Heaven, the great God will bestow the Kingdome of Heaven upon Believers.

4. *Doct.* That the Kingdome of Heaven is the free gift of God; *It is your Fathers good pleasure to give you a Kingdome.* The Kingdome of Heaven comes not to a believer by his own merits, nor by his own deservings, but by Gods free gift: the free grace of God is the great motive, it is Gods good pleasure so to do: The Saints cannot merit Heaven by their holiest actions, though they walk never so closely with God; no, no, the Kingdome of Heaven is Gods free gift unto Believers.

5. *Doct.* Lastly, That the consideration of a believers interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, should make him chearful and couragious in the practise of Holinesse, and keep him from being dismayed and discouraged at all the Afflictions and Tribulations that he meets withal in the world. This Doctrine is gathered from

from the Exhortation in the Text, and the reason of it taken together : the Exhortation, *viz.* *Fear not little flock* ; the reason of the Exhortation, *viz.* *For it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you, the Kingdome* : intimating that this one consideration that God will bestow the Kingdome of glory upon his people hereafter, should make them with all willingnesse and chearfulnesse to wade through all the calamities and incumbrances of this fraile Life. A believers heavenly interest should make him rejoyce in the midst of all his Tryals and Tribulations that he meets with from the hands of men here on Earth.

I shall chuse out the second and last of these Observations to go on upon, not having time and liberty to insist on them all ; That Observation then which I shall first of all insist upon, is this, *viz.*

Doct. That God is a believers Father, or that every true and sincere Christian hath God for his Father, and is a Child of God : *It is your Fathers good pleasure.*

Before I come to the confirmation of this Truth, I shall shew how many wayes a people or person may have God to be their Father, and they may be his Children.

First, A people or person may have God for their Father by Creation ; as God is the great Creator of the world, and they are his Creatures : in this general sense God is a Father to all the men and women in the world : to this refers that Scripture, *Mal.* 3. 10. saith the Prophet there, *have we not all one Father, hath not one God created us ?* but it is a more peculiar Sonship that belongs to believers : they have God for their Father in a more special and peculiar manner then this is.

Secondly, A people or person may be the Children
of

of God, and God may be their Father by profession; thus God was a Father to the Jewish Nation of Old, because they among all the Nations of the world did professe to own the Lord for their God, and to serve and Worship him; and in this respect God doth professe himself to be a father to *Israel*, *Jer. 3. 9. I am a Father to Israel*, saith God, *Ephraim is my first born*: and thus God is a Father to all those that doe professe his name. But if this be all the claim we can lay to God as our Father, that he is so to us, and that we are his Children only by an external profession; this will not intitle us to the Kingdome, that eternal inheritance that God hath laid up for his people in the Life to come; it is therefore yet in a more peculiar manner, that believers have God for their Father.

Thirdly, A person may have God for his Father, by Adoption and Regeneration; and thus true believers, and onely such are the Children of God, and God is their Father, *1 John 12. 13. To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God*: These are the Sons of God, the strictest and most peculiar Sons that shall be made partakers of all the priviledges of the Children of God: *viz.* Those that receive Christ into their hearts by Faith, and such as are truly regenerate and born again; these are the true and genuine Children of the most high, the Heirs of God, and Coheirs of Jesus Christ, as the expresseion is, *Romans 8.* these are the Children of whom it is spoken, *2 Corintb. 6. last, I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my Sons and Daughters saith the Lord Almighty.* Having thus shewn unto you the severall respects in which we may have God for our Father; I shall come to the confirmation

mation of it, and shall prove that believers have God for their Father in this special and peculiar manner; there are abundance of Scripture proofs for this, in which Jesus Christ, speaking to his Disciples, calleth God their Father, Mat. 5. 16. *Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorifie Your Father which is in Heaven.* And Verse 48. *Be ye perfect, as Your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* Mat. 6. 8. *Your Father knoweth what things you have need of before you ask them.* Mat. 18. 14. *Even so it is not the will of Your Father which is in Heaven those little ones should perish.* John 20. 17. *Go tell my brethren (saith Christ) that I ascend to my Father, and to Your Father, to my God, and to your God.* By these and other Scriptures we may see that God is set forth to believers under the relation of a Father to them; and as God is called in Scripture a believers Father, so they are called Sons, Gal. 4. 6. *Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a Son; and if a Son, then an Heir of God through Christ:* Again, 1 John 3. 2. *Now we are the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when we shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,* Gal. 3. 16. The Apostle speaking to the believing Gallatians, saith, *We are all the Children of God by Faith which is in Christ Jesus.* I shall no longer insist on the confirmation of this Doctrine, but shall come to the Application of it.

U S E.

Is it so that all true believers are the Children of God, and have God for their Heavenly Father; then the first use may be of comfort and consolation to the godly, in that they are so nearly related to the great God: believers by virtue of their Son-ship, having
 God

God for their Heavenly Father, have abundant ground of comfort and consolation upon these several accounts.

First, They are under his Fatherly care and providence: Fathers take care for their Children to provide them things necessary, as Meat, Drink, and Apparel; *ab isdem alimur ex quibus generamur*, is a true Maxim, we are nourished of those of whom we are begotten; Fathers when their Children ask bread will not give them stones, nor when they ask fish, will they give them scorpions, *Mat. 7. 9. He that provides not these things for his Children is worse then an Infidel*, *1 Tim. 4. 8.* and hath God commanded this from Parents towards their children: and will not God much more provide for his children that are truly Regenerate and born again, and that have his image by faith engraven on their souls, he will doe it much more abundantly, *Mat. 7. 11. If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to those that ask him*: This then is one great priviledge that believers are made partakers of by vertue of this relation, having God for their Heavenly Father; God will certainly provide good things for them, both for their being and well-being here, and hereafter: and they may come to God as a Father, with holy boldnesse of Faith for all things that they shall stand in need of; God takes care for those that are strangers and enemies to him, and makes his Rain to fall upon the unjust, as well as upon the just, *Mat. 5. 45. He giveth them Rain from Heaven, filling their hearts with Food and gladnesse*, *Acts 14. 7. And will he not much rather feed his own Childeen, he giveth Food to all flesh*, *Psal. 136. 25.* And will he not much rather take care for his own Children that are ingrafted into him

him by faith, that doe love and serve him. If Gods bounty be largely extended to those that are strangers and enemies to him, even to those that go on in sinne and wickednesse, as many times it is: then certainly he will kill the Fatted Calf for his own Children, as the Father of the Prodigal did for his returning Sonne. Nay, in this the great God exceedeth earthly Parents, as far as Heaven is above the Earth; for Natural Parents they give good things to their Children when they ask them, but God the Father of Spirits will do much more abundantly for his Children; above what they are able to ask or think: the Petitions of Gods Children may be large, their desires and their thoughts larger then their Petitions; for we are not alwayes able to expresse outwardly, what inwardly we desire; but God will do more abundantly for his people beyond all these. Let us look into the Word of God, and we shall there see what noble provision he hath made for his people: what Food? yea, Angels Food he hath provided for them; what a feast of Fat things (I mean of spiritual Dainties and Delicates) he hath dressed for them; for their Bread, they shall have the Bread of Life: he that eateth thereof shall never hunger, John 6. 48. they shall have their fill of that hidden Manna laid up in the Sanctuary. We read of Benjamins Messe, Gen. 43. last, That it was five times as much as any of his brethrens; but the Children of God, their food that they shall have from their heavenly Father, shall be a thousand times better, and more satisfactory, then that which shall be given to the men of the world; they shall have their measures heaped up, pressed down, and runing over, Psalm. 34. 10. The young Lions shall lack and suffer Hunger, but the Children of God, those that cry unto God their Father, shall want no good thing;

thing : but especially, spiritual good things they shall be sure to have their fill of these, and shall be satisfied with them, even as with marrow and fatnesse ; and for their drink they shall have the Heavenly Nectar, the water of Life, the blood of Jesus Christ, *the which whosoever drinketh shall thirst no more, John 4. 14.* they shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatnesse of his House, he will make them Drink of the River of his pleasures : for with God is the Fountain of Life, *in his light they shall see light, Psal. 38. 8, 9.* there is a River, *the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God, Psal. 46. 4.* and his Children shall drink of this River of water of Life, *clear as Chrystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and the Lamb, Rev. 22. 1.* It is for these especially that God hath provided the spiritual milk of the word, that they may grow thereby : they shall suck sweetnesse out of the promises, those rich breasts of Consolation ; and for their Apparel, the Children of God may say as the Prophet, *Isa. 61. 10. I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my soul shall be joyfull in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation ; he hath covered me with a robe of righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride Adorneth herself with Jewels.* What shall I say ? they shall be clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, a garment without spot blemish, white as Snow ; even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of those.

Thus you have the first ground of Consolation to believers, upon the account of having God for their Father, he will certainly provide for them those things that shall be necessary, both in this Life, and in the Life to come.

Secondly. Is God a Father to Believers ? then another ground of Consolation is this ; That he will

defend them from all their Enemies; how mightily doth it provoke natural Parents to see their Children abused: how quickly will their eye affect their heart, and stir them up to come in and rescue them: so will the Lord doe for those that are his Children by Adoption and Regeneration: he will defend them, he will be a wall of Fire round about them; so that all their Enemies both Spiritual and Temporal, shall not be able to doe them any real hurt. The Devil, and all his wiles and temptations: the world and all it's tempting allurements: ye, all the policy and malice of Earth and Hell, shall not be able to work their ruine; the Lord is on their side, and they have more for them, then there are against them. Upon this consideration it was that *David* tells us in his Book of *Psalms*, *I though I walk (saith he) in the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear none ill, for thou O Lord art my rock and my fortresse, and my salvation eke for ever.*

Would we not account him unworthy the name of a Father, that would suffer his Children to be beaten, and abused, and destroyed before his Face, and not act in their defence? and will God suffer his dear Children so to be? no certainly, *He that toucheth them, toucheth the Apple of his eye, Zach. 2. 8.* and God accounts what is done to them, as if it were done to himself in person; *In as much as ye did it unto these little Ones, ye did it unto me; will Christ say one day, as he tells us, Mat. 25. 40. And, in as much as ye did it not unto the least of these my Brethren, ye did it not unto me, ver. 45.* Beloved, there is a time coming, when the great God will reckon with ungodly men for all the injuries and wrongs which they have done to his people, as if they were done unto himself immediately:

Oh! consider of this you that are true Believers;
are

are you environ'd round with adversaries, either spiritual or temporal? you have God for your defence, a God infinite in power, which is able to defend you from the hardest assaults of your most potent and pollick Enemies: his name is a strong Tower, the righteous flye unto it and are safe. Are you incountring with great temptations? the Lord being your Father, he will protect you, and not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear; but together with the temptation, will make way for your escape, that you may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13. The Lord knoweth that his Children are lyable to many Temptations, from Satan, from the World, and from their own Corruptions; and that they are subject to many Afflictions and Tribulations from the hands of men: and therefore he will be sure to be with them, and to be a very present help to them in the time of Trouble.

Thirdly, Is God a Believers Heavenly Father? Then there is comfort for them, that God will pity them, and compassionate them in all their Afflictions; a tender Father pitieth his Children when they are in any calamity; as for instance, in Sicknes, how will the groans of a Child go near the heart of a Loving Parent? how doe the Agonies of pain in the Child cause grief and sorrow in the Parents Heart? What means would not a Parent use, to procure the health and ease of a Child; *My life is bound up in the life of the Lad,* says Jacob concerning Benjamin. *Oh Absolon, my Son, my Son, would God I had dyed for thee,* sayes David concerning Absolon. What a sympathizing and fellow-feeling will a dear and tender Parent have of the miseries of his Children: and as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; Psal. 103. 13. The Lord is very pitiful,

James 5. 11. The pity and compassion of the Lord towards his Children, is excellently set forth in that Scripture, *Jer. 31. 20. Is Ephraim my dear Son, is he a pleasant Child; I spake against him, I doe earnestly remember him still, therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy on him, saith the Lord; The bowels of the Lord doe exceedingly yearn towards his people in all their afflictions and distresses, and he is full of pity and compassion towards them.*

Fourthly, Is God a Father to all true Believers? Then here is also for their Comfort, that God doth, and alwayes will love them, and take delight in them; he Loves them with an everlasting Love; they are his chosen Jewels, and he will certainly one day polliish them, though he suffer them to be among the rubbish of the world for a while, they are his pleasant pictures, and he delights to be looking on them, *The eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy, Psal. 33. 18.* God takes pleasure to be viewing the new Creature, which he hath framed by his own spirit in the hearts of his people, and his own Image which he stamped upon them; and herein the Love that the Lord beareth his Children, infinitely exceeds the Love that Earthly Parents bear to theirs, in that he loveth them continually; Earthly Parents, they Love their Children, but their Love may be withdrawn from them again, and is so oftentimes; but the Love of God will never be withdrawn from his people; whom the Lord loveth, he loveth to the end: and although his loving countenance may be Eclipsed for a time, and they may loose the sence of his love to them, by their failings and sinful infirmities yet the Lord, loves them still; *There is nothing shall be able to separate believers from the love of God, Rom. 8. 35. and inward;* the Apostle Paul putteth the questi-

there, (saith he) *Who shall separate us from the love of God: shall tribulation, or distresse, or persecution, or famine, or nakednesse, or peril, or sword, as it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter: yea, (saith he) in all these things we are more then Conquerors through him that loved us; for I am perswaded that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; it is not all the troubles of the world, nor Tribulations, nor any thing, that can render believers lesse lovely in the eyes of Christ: It is not all the Devils in Hell that can withdraw Gods love from his Children, although they do endeavour it by enticing them to sin by their Temptations and then by accusing them to God for sin; yet all this will not root them out of Gods love: though the Divil do labour to pick a quarrel between God and his people, yet it is not Principalities, nor Powers, it is not all the power of Hell that shall be able to withdraw Gods love from them.*

Fifthly, Is God a Father to Believers? then they may take this for their comfort, that he will continually be mindful of them; Parents do remember their children, and are mindful of them: so the Lord, he remembreth his people and will never forget them, *Isa. 49. 15. Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her Womb; yea, they may, yet I will not forget thee: Earthly Parents, though it be but rare, yet they may, and sometimes doe forget their Children: but God he is more tender and mindful of his Children then earthly parents are of theirs; yea, they may, yet will not I*

forget thee, &c. Though Gods people doe too often forget him, yet he doth never forget them, but remember them in all their Conditions, even in their low Estate, God is mindful of them, *Psalm. 136. 23: Who remembered us in our low Estate, for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Lastly, Is God a Father to Believers? then they may take this for their comfort, that God will provide an inheritance for them hereafter: Fathers provide Portions and Inheritances for their children for hereafter; so doth God, *Rom. 8.* Now saith the Apostle, *We are the Sons of God, and if Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Coheirs with Jesus Christ;* How often is the Kingdome of Heaven called an Inheritance, the Inheritance of the Saints, or them that are sanctified, *Acts 20. 32. Acts 26. 8.* There is an Eternal inheritance laid up for the children God for hereafter; yea, the Kingdome of Heaven is their Inheritance, and it is now preparing for them, *Job, 14. 2.* and they shall have assuredly one day an abundant entrance into their Fathers Kingdome; the Children of God, while they are in the world, they are as Heirs in their minority, they have not yet the possession of their inheritance, but it is theirs, and they shall have it in reversion; but hereafter, when they shall leave this Earthly Tabernacle, then they shall have the possession of it; every true and sincere believer, he is an Heir to a Crown, even a Crown of glory that fadeth not away: *Their lines are fallen to them in a pleasant place, they have a goodly Heritage: The Lord is the portion of their Inheritance, Psalm. 16. 5, 6.* it is the hope of this Inheritance of theirs, that carryeth on the soules of the Saints in the whole course of their lives, and maketh them joyfully and willingly to wade through all their Troubles and Difficulties that they meet with in
their

their way to Heaven. It is the consideration of *this* their portion and inheritance which they are intitled to by having God for their Father, that makes them forget the things that are behind; and presse forward towards the mark for the price of the high calling which is in Jesus Christ; it is their acting faith upon *this*, and having an eye to the recompence of reward, that makes them run with patience the race that is set before them: as knowing, that when they have finished their course, they shall receive a Crown of Life, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give them at that day.

Hear the godly have the earnest of their inheritance, which is the Spirit of God, *Eph. 1. 14. After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* Here believers have the promise of their Inheritance; The word of God is a believers Patent for his inheritance, in which God doth as it were by promise make over Heaven, and Happinesse, and glory to true believers, to be enjoyed by them for ever in the Life to come; but hereafter, then they shall have the fruition, and possession of it.

Would you know what a glorious inheritance this is, that the Children of God by believing are intitled to? *1 Pet. 1. 4. It is an Inheritance incorruptable, Undeified, which fadeth not away:* They are Heirs to a Crown of glory, they are Heirs of God, and coheirs with Jesus Christ, which is the Heir of all things: believe it Friends, it is such a glorious inheritance, that the Children of God are intitled unto, that all the inheritances and possessions in the world, are but a trifle in comparison of it; to set out the beauty and excellency of the Saints inheritance, is a task fitter for

some Angel, then for a mortal Creature ; *For eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive what the Lord hath laid up for them that fear him, Isa. 64. 4.*

Thus you see what abundant cause of comfort believers have upon this consideration, that God is their Father, and that they are his Children in every condition of their lives ; in every Trouble, either outward or inward : howsoever it be with a regenerate Christian, one that is a true child of God, he hath cause to take comfort in this.

First, Is a Believer in want here in the world ? is he in distresse, and driven to straights, not knowing what course to take for the supplying of his natural wants (as Gods people are driven to such conditions sometimes) he can go to God as unto a Father, and make your wants and necessities known to him ; he both can and will find out some way or other for a supply for you : he that hath promised so large a portion hereafter in Heaven, will not deny so much of this world as is necessary for you in your way to Heaven ; *Your Father knows what good things you have need of, Mat. 6. 8.* God which is the believers Father, knows what things they need, and he is ready to hear them, and knoweth how to help them.

Secondly, Is a Believer in danger, is he environ'd about with his Enemies on every side, and compassed about with those that seek their hurt ? Oh ! what comfort is it that he can go to God as unto a Father for help, even to him that is Almighty and able in a moment to defend them from their most powerful and politick Adversaries ; is a godly man in danger, and hath he Enemies that do wrongfully seek his Life, as *David* had ? *Psalms. 31. 13.* yet he may have the same confidence that *David* had in that condition ; and say

say as he said in the following Verse : *Yet I trusted in thee, Oh Lord, I said thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hand of mine Enemies, and from them that persecute me.*

Thirdly, Doth a Believer find his corruptions within, to rebel against the regenerate part ? doth he find the Law in his Members, which is warring against the Law of his mind, to lead him into Captivity to the Law of sin and death ? doth he find his sins to be very strong within him, and that they begin to draw him away from God ? Oh ! what comfort is this to a child of God in this condition, that he can go and complain then to his Heavenly Father, and be confident that his Father will hear him, and help him, and make him more then a conqueror over all the Enemies of his soul.

Fourthly, Art thou that art a believer in doubt, and knowest not what course to take ? go to thy Heavenly Father for direction : he is the infinitely wise God, and he will be sure to direct thee for the best.

Fifthly, Art thou slandered, reviled, and reproached in the World, and made the common scorn and derision of the Ungodly ? go to thy Father, thy Heavenly Father, and complain to him : he will certainly clear up thine innocency, as the light at Noon-day, and wipe off all the reproaches that are wrongfully cast upon thee.

Sixthly, Art thou that art a Believer wronged by men, and knowest not how to right thy selfe ? go to thy Heavenly Father, he will certainly set all things right one day : neither is it all the power and policy of thine adversaries, nor their riches, nor any thing that shall be able to pervert him, and hinder him from redressing thy wronges, and from doing thee right.

Seventhly

Seventhly and lastly, Dost thou find thy self to be in a state of languishing, thou that art a believer, for to such I am speaking all this while? Dost thou find thy natural strength to decay, and thy sickness to encrease, and thy paines to grow upon thee? putting thee in mind that thy body must be shortly laid in the grave; telling thee that thou mayst expect within a few days or hours to lay down thy earthly Tabernacle, and to encounter with the pangs of death? Oh happy soul then, that canst make thy approaches to God, as unto a Father; and breath out thy soul into the bosome of thy heavenly Father, and say as Christ did when he was on the cross; *Father into thy hand I commend my Spirit*: Believe it Christian, thou that art truly such, it will afford thee more comfort then that God is thy Heavenly Father, and thou his Child by Adoption and Regeneration, then if thou wert related to the greatest Prince, and the most puissant Monarch in all the world.

Thus I have done with the first Use, which is a Use of Consolation to the godly, upon this consideration, that they are the Children of God, and that he is their heavenly Father.

2. Use for Caution.

Secondly, If it be so, that all true Believers are the Children of God, and that he is their Father; then this should caution wicked men to beware how they meddle with Gods Children: Oh! have a care of afflicting, wronging, persecuting, hurting of the people of God least you be found fighters against God; have a care of anoying, and troubling those that are so near and dear to God, that are so tender to him as the Apple of his eye: beware of vexing and molesting those that are so nearly related to the great King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; you may think it may be
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that you may do what you will to the godly, because they are low and mean in the word, as many of them are; But I must tell you, as mean and as low as they are in your esteem, they are near and dear to God: carnal men may think that they may oppresse, and wrong, and do what they please to the people of God, because they are weak and not able to help themselves; but little do they think how nearly the great God doth account himself concern'd in their affairs; little do the great ones of the world consider, what heavy reckonings will be laid to their charge one day for injuring, wronging and molesting the poor servants of God; if they did, surely, we should not have them so busily employed therein as they are. Thus for the second Use.

3. Use for Examination.

Thirdly, Is it so, that Believers have God for their Heavenly Father, then here is matter of Tryal; how shall we know, whether God be our Father or no? and whether we be his Children in this peculiar manner by Adoption and Regeneration. It is true, God is a father to us by Creation, and we are his Children by Profession; but if this be all the Relation that we bear to God, this will not intitle us to holinesse and salvation, without we are Regenerate and born again, and are become his Children by Regeneration; and God be our father by vertue of the New Covenant: *We are all by Nature the Children of Wrath, Ephes. 2. 3.* How shall we know then, whether we are gotten into this state of Sonship, by Adoption and Regeneration, and whether God be our heavenly father? there are many that pretend that they have God for their father, when as yet they are under the Dominion of their lusts; and are strangers to a work of true conversion and regeneration, and Enemies to a Life of holi-

holinesse, and a groundlesse presumption that men are the Children of God, when there is no such matter, hath proved the bane of many Thousand Soules. I shall therefore give you these Characters, whereby we may know whether we are the Children of God in this peculiar manner or no.

First, Whose Image do you bear? do you bear the Image of God? or else do you bear the Image of Satan? Those that are the Children of God by Adoption and regeneration, they are such as bear their Fathers Image; the Image of God which is created in righteousness and in true holinesse, is ingraven upon their souls: they are such as doe bear the Image of the Heavenly Adam, 1 Cor, 15. 49. *And they have put on the New man which is created in knowledge, after the Image of him that created him, Col. 3. 10.* And is it so with thee, dost thou bear the Image of God? hast thou a new and holy nature put into thee, inclining thee to all holy duties, and avoid all sinne? art thou renewed in holinesse, then thou art a Child of God, and God is thy Heavenly Father? but if it be not thus with thee, if thou hast not this new and holy nature wrought in thee; but thy old corrupt nature is predominant, inclining thee to sin: whatsoever groundlesse presumption thou mayst have, yet thou art no true Child of God by Regeneration and Adoption.

Secondly, Wouldest thou know whither thou art the true Child of God or no? by whose spirit art thou led? by the spirit of God, or by the spirit of Satan; they that have God for their Father, are led by the spirit of God, Rom. 8. 14. *As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the Sons of God:* try thy selfe then by this, art thou led by the spirit of God? Dost thou live after the flesh, and not after the spirit? Dost thou mind the things of the spirit, and not the things
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of the flesh? if so, then thou mayst comfortably conclude that thou art a Child of God, and that he is thy heavenly father: we may know our Sonship by our spirit, if we are the Sons of God by adoption and regeneration: then we are led by a spirit of God, which is a spirit of prayer, *Rom. 8. 15.* A spirit of liberty making us free from the dominion of our lusts, and from the slavery of sin, and Satan, *2 Cor. 3. 17.* *John 8. 32.* A spirit of love to God, and to the people of God, *1 John 5. 2.*

Thirdly, We may know whether God be our heavenly father or no: by this do we labour to set forth the honour of God? Children, they are very tender of the honour of their Parents; this is a great duty to honour earthly Parents, *Exod. 20. 11.* much more should we honour God, which is the father of spirits; *If I am your Father, where is mine honour?* (saith Christ) if God be our father, where is that honour that we should yield to him? if we are the Children of God by Regeneration and Sanctification, then we are very tender of the honour of Christ? it will make our hearts rise to hear his name blasphemed, or taken in vain: his Sabbaths prophaned, his Worship corrupted by humane mixtures: his Creatures abused unto excess, his Commandements broken: these things will grieve and trouble us more than any thing, if we are Gods. children in truth; But if we can see God dishonoured by the unholy lives of carnal men, his Commands trampled under foot, and yet not be grieved at this: but canst close in with those that make it their business to dishonour God, then thou art no child of God in this peculiar sense: the great dishonour that is brought to God in the world, is a sad sign that there's but few, very few, that are in truth the children of God: and the abounding and increasing
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of all sorts of sins, whereby God is exceedingly dishonoured; as Drunkenness, Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, Uncleanesse, Lying, Extortion, Oppression, Scorning and Deriding at Holinesse, contempt of Gods Ordinances, Persecution of his faithful laborious Ministers and People; I say the abounding of these and such like abominations, is a very sad evidence, that there are very few that have God for their heavenly father in this special and peculiar manner, and that are his children by Adoption and Regeneration.

Lastly, Wouldest thou know whether God be thy father, and thou his child by this? whether thou art couragious in wayes of God, and in the practise of godlinesse? they that have God for their heavenly father, they have a noble and Heroick spirit; they are such as will not be ashamed, nor afraid to lead a holy life; notwithstanding all the mocks and taunts, and threats of the world: they that are of a base timorous spirit, that are afraid of owning the wayes of holinesse, for fear of being reproached, reviled, or opposed by the prophane world: they that are afraid to cleave to the wayes and people of God in discouraging times, they are not of the right strain; say not then that thou art born of God, unlesse thou canst prove thy noble extraction, by thy noble and heroick courage and resolution; notwithstanding all the trouble, calamity, and persecution thou mayst meet with in the world. Thus much for Examination.

4. Use for Exhortation.

Fourthly, Is it so, &c. Then here is a word of Exhortation.

First, Unto those that are Unregenerate, that have not God for their father in this peculiar manner: and that is, that they would never be in rest, till they come

to be united unto Jesus Christ, and to have him to be their father by regeneration ; it is a sad thing to be void of this : when we cannot go to God as to a father, and cannot expect any thing from him, as from a father. Oh ! how little do Thousands think of this, whether they are the children of God, and have God for their father or no ; they care not for it, they make not out after it : or take it for granted, when they have no true and real ground so to do. Oh then labour to get into this state of Sonship ; close with Jesus Christ by a lively, operative, heart purifying faith, that thou mayst thereby be invested into Gods family, and become his child ; consider, that before thou art thus by faith ingrafted into Christ, thou hast wofull parents, thou art a child of disobedience, *Ephes. 2. 2. A Child of wrath, Verse 3. A Child of Satan, John 8. 44.*

Secondly, Here is a word of Counsel and Exhortation to the godly, that are the children of God by Adoption and Regeneration.

First, To those my first counsel is, that you would make it your greatest care and diligence to please your heavenly father, and have a care of sinning against him ; consider, that the sins of Gods Children are very grievous to him, *ὡς πρὸς τὸν πατέρα*, said *Cesar* to his Son *Britus*, when he saw him among his betrayers ; *What and thou my Son ?* so will God say to his Children, when they grieve him by sin : what and thou my Sonne, my Child, one whom I have Adopted my Heir ; what, will you sin against me ? I thought you had had more love ; have I loved you so much, and do you love me so little ; hath my spirit comforted you, and will you grieve it ? have my bowels yearned towards you, and will you kick against them ? have I been crucified for you, and will you crucifie me

me again afresh by your sins? The nearer the Relation is that the soul beareth to God, the greater is the aggravation of the sin against God.

Secondly, Labour to shew forth your noble extraction, by your noble and raised Affections; it is beneath the Son of a Prince to be taken up with trifles; it is beneath, on that is Heir to a Kingdome, to set his affections upon low and base things, things of nought; So it is beneath the Children of the great King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, to let their affections run out inordinately after the world, and the enjoyments thereof; they are born from above, and therefore should set their affections upon things above, and not on things on earth, *Collos. 3. 2.* What an unsuitable thing is it for a Christian to be taken up with the inordinate love of the world; it is a Degradation to the Heirs of Heaven, to have their minds taken up only or mostly with Earth; and earthly Vanities, they are, *ad majora nati*, born to greater things; it is unbecoming such to soyle their Affections with Earth, which are born to an inheritance incorruptible which fadeth not away. Oh, that the Children of God, and such as do profess themselves so to be, would manifest their holy and heavenly extraction, by their holy and heavenly Affections: and that such as are the Sons and Daughters of God by Adoption and Sanctification, would not walk so farre beneath that Relation.

Thirdly, Labour to imitate your heavenly father: *Be you followers of God as dear Children, Ephes. 5. 1.* *Be ye merciful as your heavenly father is merciful; be ye holy as he is holy; be ye compassionate as he is in all things;* labour to imitate your Heavenly Father, it is a Christians honour to be like God, and to imitate him.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Labour more and more to obey your Heavenly Father : our natural Parents may require obedience of us, and it is our duty to give it them ; much more may him that is the father of Spirits require it of us, and it is much more our duty to give it him : *Walk as obedient children*, 1 Pet. 1. 14. yea, you must obey him chearfully too ; the obedience of children is herein differenced, from the obedience of slaves ; in that slaves are drawn to their duty out of a slavish fear, but children come to it willingly, out of a filial affection. Oh therefore let your obedience to God be chearful and voluntary : take delight to do the will of your heavenly father.

Lastly, Submit to your heavenly fathers chastisements ; this is the Exhortation of the Apostle to the Hebrews, Heb. 12. 5, 6, 7. *My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with Sons, for what Son is he whom the father chasteneth not : but if ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bastards and not Sons : Let us not then murmur and faint under our afflictions and chastisements, but let us submit to them, and labour to grow the better for them.* Thus much for the first Observation, That God is a Believers heavenly father ; the other Observation that I proposed to insist upon from this Text, was the last of the five mentioned in the beginning, and it contains the chief summe and scope of the whole Verse, and is most suitable to our Times, and to this Occasion, you may remember was this.

Doct. That the consideration of a Believers interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, should make him chearful and courageous in the practise of holinesse,

and keep him from being dismayed at all the trouble and calamities that he meeteth withal in the World: *Fear not* (saith Christ) *little flock, for it is your fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdome.* In this Observation there is two things supposed.

First, It is supposed in this Doctrine that believers have an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven: This I need not now stand to prove, having spoken to it already in the handling of the former Observation: God being their father, he hath provided an eternall inheritance of glory for them in his eternall Kingdome.

Secondly, It is supposed in the Doctrine, that Believers are like to meet with opposition from the world; they are diligent in the practise of godlinesse, are driving a Trade for Heaven: they shall be sure to meet with abundance of trouble and hindrance from the world, and the Prince of the world; this is a truth exceeding manifest, both from Scripture and experience: *We shall be hated of all men for his names sake,* *Mat. 10. 22.* And because Christ hath chosen his people out of the world, *Therefore the world hateth them,* *John 15. 19.* And experience makes this evident in all ages of the world; those that are godly & walk with God, they have been sure to have their portion of afflictions and tribulations from the hands and tongues of the malicious and ungodly world; and my designe is to shew, what little cause the Servants of God, that have an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, to be afraid or dismayed at any of these hindrances and oppositions that they meet withal in their way to Heaven. For the handling of this Doctrine, and the fitting of it for our improvement by Application; I shall speak to these three things.

First, I shall shew you by some instances from the
world

word of God, how the Saints that have had an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, have been encouraged in the wayes of God, and have had their spirits born up in their lowest condition, and in their greatest tryals and troubles here below.

Secondly, I shall shew you that believers are dehorred from dispondency; and being dismayed under their sufferings upon the consideration of their Heavenly interest.

Thirdly, I shall give you some Reasons, why believers, that have a Title to the Heavenly glory, should be couragious and undaunted, and not dismayed at all; their external Trials and Tribulations that they meet withall from the World: and so shall come to the Application.

First, For the first of these, I might give you many instances from the word of God, of the courage and magnanimity of the heirs of Heaven in their Tryals; as *David*, how couragious was he in the Lord, even in his lowest condition, *Psalms. 46. 1, 2, 3, 4.* *God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in Trouble; therefore (saith he) will we not fear though the earth be removed, though the Mountains be cast into the midst of the Sea, though the Waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the Mountains shake with the swelling thereof, Selah. Psalm. 118. 6. The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can doe unto me: David* he had put confidence in God, and therefore was not afraid of man; where the fear of God is, and where the hope of glory is, there the slavish fear of man will quickly vanish away; this no doubt was that which made the three Children not to be afraid of the fiery furnace, nor *Daniel* of the Den of Lions, *Dan. 3. 16. Dan. 6.* We have a notable example to this purpose, *Hab. 3. 17, 18.* *Although the Figtree should not blosome,*

nor fruit be in the Vine ; though the labour of the Olive should fail, and the fields should yield no meat, though the flocks should be cut off from the fold, and there should be no herd in the stall: yet wil I rejoyce in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my salvation. The consideration of his heavenly interest, and that God was the God of his salvation ; was that which not only kept the Prophet from being dismayed, but also made him to rejoyce in the absence of all Creature joyes and comforts : the want of these worldly things were not able to abate his heavenly joy, which he had in the God of his salvation. The consideration of their Heavenly interest, and their title to the everlasting glory was that which made the Apostles of Christ so couragious and comfortable under all their sufferings that they underwent for Christ : This was that which made the Martyr Steven so fearlesse and undaunted, when he was on the brink of death ; and when the stones flew about his ears, when he could look up into Heaven, the place of his inheritance, where he was going, and take a view of that Heavenly glory, *Act. 7. 55.* A believer that can look up by an eye of Faith upon Christ and Heaven, and take a view of the unseen world, the place of his eternal rest and felicity, will be able in some measure to undergo with comfort the sharpest and bitterest persecutions that the malice of Men or Divels can expose him to ; This was that which made Paul and Sylas sing praises at midnight, when they were shut up in prison, and their Feet in the stocks, *Act. 16. 25.* This was that which caused the believing Hebrewes to take joyfully the spoyling of their goods ; even the consideration of their interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, *Heb. 10. 34.* For ye had compassion of me in my bonds. and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing that in Heaven you have a better
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and a more enduring substance; Their knowledge of this their interest in the Heavenly riches, made them willing to part with the earthly riches for the sake of Christ.

Secondly, The next thing to be spoken unto, is this: to shew that the people of God upon this consideration of their interest in the Kingdome of glory, have been dehorted from fear and dispondence, and exhorted to courage and magnanimity in the wayes of God: Upon this consideration it is that Christ exhorts his little flock in the Text not to fear, because that God would give them the Kingdome of Heaven. How often are the Servants of God in Scripture dehorted from fear, *Isa. 41. 10. Fear not, I am with thee, be not dismayed, I am thy God. Vers. 14. Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee saith the Lord thy redeemer. Isa. 51. 7, 8. Fear ye not the reproach of men, be not dismayed at their revilings, for the Moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool, but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation; And again, Vers. 12. Who art thou that shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the Son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgeteth the Lord thy Maker, that stretcheth out the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the Earth? And our Saviour in the New Testament, to the supporting of Believers under their afflictions and tribulations; tells them that it is a blessed thing thus to be dealt withall by the World, *Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for their's is the Kingdome of Heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is**

your reward in Heaven. And Luke 6. 22. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate from you their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evill for the the Son of mans sake, rejoyce ye in that day, and leap for Joy, for behold your reward is great in Heaven. The consideration of our interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, should keep us from being dismayed, though we are hated, persecuted, reproached by the prophane world, but should make us rejoyce rather and leap for joy. Thus much for the second thing, which is, that the people of God are dehorted from fear and dispondency, and exhorted to courage and magnanimity in the wayes of God, from the very consideration of their interest in the Kingdome of Heaven.

Thirdly, I shall give you the reasons why Believers, those that have an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven should not fear nor be dismayed at any outward trouble, opposition or Tribulation that they meet with in the world.

First, It is very unsutable for one that hath secured the Heavenly interest and his title to eternal glory, to be dismayed at a thing of nought: how unsutable is it for one that is an Heir of Heaven, to be excessively grieved and disconsolate because he meeteth with some rubs in his way thither; Oh how unseemly is it for a Child of light to walk in darknesse and heaviness, because somewhat of the world falls a cross to his expectation or desire; for one that is to enjoy eternall happiness in the life to come, to be dismayed and perplexed at every petty-cross that he meeteth with here below? how unseemly is it for a Child of God, an Heir of Heaven, for one that shall sit down with *Abraham* and *Isaac* and *Jacob* in the Heavenly glory, to go up and down drooping at in-
considerable

considerable crosses and light afflictions, which are but for a moment.

For a worldling that hath all his good things here, and hath no other portion but in this life, to be grieved and perplexed at his external losses and troubles; this is not so much for such a one to be grieved when he is thwarted in his designs, and when the world falls a cross to him : this is but sutable and agreeable to such a one, because he hath placed his Hope, his Contentment, his Joy and Delight in these things : and therefore being deprived of them, he is deprived of his best things, his Portion, his All.

But for a Child of God, one that hath an interest in eternal life and glory, to be cast down and dismayed at such small things, as the Afflictions, Trials and Tribulations of the World ; Oh what an unseemly thing is this, as if their heavenly interest did not give them greater cause of Joy and Rejoycing, then those external worldly Afflictions doe give them cause of Sadness and Disconsolation.

The Franctick mirth of the prophane world, that are in the high way to Damnation, and the groundlesse perplexities of the regenerate Children of God, are both alike unsutable and unseemly ; although not both alike dangerous.

To see a Worldling that hath nothing else to comfort and support him, but the fading enjoyments of this present life, to merry and joviall as if all were well ; and on the other hand, to see a Believer that is an heir of Heaven, to live in a drooping and disconsolate state because of these outward troubles, is cause of pity and lamentation,

Secondly, As it is unsutable for a Child of God that hath secured his eternal state, and made sure of his heavenly interest, to be dismayed at the Afflictions

tions of the world, so it is very unwarrantable; believers are commanded to be much in holy rejoicing. Rejoyce, saith Christ to his Disciples, *because your names are written in Heaven*, Luke 10. 20. *Be glad in the Lord, oh you righteous, and shout for joy all ye upright in heart*, Psal. 32. 11. *Rejoyce in the Lord, oh ye righteous for prayse is comely for the upright*. Psal. 33. 1. *Rejoyce evermore*, 1 Thes. 5. 16. Oh how exceeding unwarrantable is it then for those that have an interest in the heavenly glory to be discouraged at their outward afflictions, by which they doe disparage Religion and frighten away others from the dores of grace.

Thirdly, it is irrationall for one that hath secured his interest in the heavenly Kingdom to be afraid of his worldly afflictions and tribulations, seeing all the losses and crosses of the World are as nothing comparatively to such an one: let a child of God but weigh and ponder such things aright, and compare the cause of joy that he hath by vertue of his heavenly interest on the one hand with the cause of sorrow that he hath by reason of the crosses of the world on the other, and he will see that he hath a thousand times more cause of joy then of sorrow; and therefore the thoughts of his heavenly interest should swallow up those of his worldly troubles and disappointments. *I reckon* (saith the Apostle Paul) *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us* Rom. 1. 18. And the same Apostle tells us elsewhere, our light afflictions which are but for a moment worketh out for us a farre more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17. Now is it not unreasonable for a believer to be grieved and disquietted with those light afflictions which shall be

recompenced with an eternal weight of glory? what can a child of God lose as long as his God, his portion, his interest in Heaven is safe and secured to him? what are all the losses that he can sustain in the world, as long as he is interessed in the eternal kingdom of glory.

I must tell you believers, ye that walk holily and closely with God, and have a title to the kingdome of heaven, for you to be grieved, and discontented because all things doe not concurre according to your desires in the world, is unreasonable and absurd; as if a rich man that hath a great estate, and fair Houses, and Orchards, should be disquietted because the wind bloweth away a few leaves from his Trees.

Is not the kingdome of Heaven that thou art entitled to enough to make thee amends for all thy troubles and calamities in the end? art thou troubled by the profane world, and vexed up and down by thy enemies, and not suffered to rest in quiet; and is it not enough for thee that the kingdom of Heaven is the place of thine eternall rest and happinesse, where thou shalt be for ever advanced above their reach? art thou exposed to the losse of thy place and estate in the world, and will not an incorruptible crown of glory, and an eternal inheritance among them that are sanctified make thee amends for those petty losses that thou sustaineest here? art thou the off-scouring of the world here, and is it not enough that thou shalt be glorified in the presence of Saints and Angels hereafter? art thou slandered and reproached by the world, and is not this enough to support thee that thou shalt be acquitted at the barre of Christ? dost thou suffer the losse of liberty, and
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art thou under restraint, and imprisonment, and is not this enough to comfort thee that thou art free from the captivity and dominion of sinne, and art rid of those chaines and fetters by which so many thousands in the world are led captive by Satan at his pleasure, and that thou art free from the prison of hell? put case (which is the greatest trouble that a godly man can undergoe in the world) thou art to lose thy life for the sake of Christ, and of a good conscience, however a believers interest in the kingdome of Heaven should keep him from being dismayed at that losse: an eternal life of happinesse and glory will be enough to recompence thee a thousand fold for losse of this fraile life. Thus you have the third Reason, it is irrational for a believer that hath an interest in the kingdome of heaven to be dismayed at those outward crosses and losses that he sustaines in the world, because they are very little and inconsiderable while their God, their portion, their heavenly interest is safe and secure to them.

Lastly, one that is an heir of Heaven, and hath a title to the heavenly kingdome, should be courageous in the waies of God, and not be daunted at his outward troubles, because of the short continuance of them, as the joyes and pleasures of the world are but for a little moment of time, so the sorrows and tribulations of the world are but for a small moment of time; neither the troubles of the godly, though they may be sharp, yet they are but short, death will quickly put a period to them all, all the tryals and tribulations of the Saints will be at an end when they come to enter into their everlasting rest. The Saints in Heaven are perfectly freed as from the evill of sinne, so from the evill of suffering, they

they will be out of the reach of their most powerfull and malicious adversaries. Now what little reason hath a believer that hath an interest in the kingdom of glory to be dismayed at his worldly troubles which shall so soon be done away, when he hath title to everlasting happinesse to support him? who is there that would be dismayed at the sufferings of a few yeares or weeks, if he were assured of an eternal weight of glory to make him amends for it. Thus much for the Doctrinall part.

Use 1.

Is it so, that a believers interest in the kingdome of Heaven should make him chearfull and couragious in the waies of God, and keep him from being dismayed at the sufferings and afflictions that he meeteth withall in the world. Is it so that one that hath a title to heaven hath cause of joy in the midst of his greatest sorrows and troubles, then

First of all here is matter of triall and examination for us to try our selves whether we have a title to heaven or no; we would all rejoyce to have somewhat which might effectually support us, and beare us up under troubles and afflictions in the world, and it is sad when we are in trouble if we have nothing to support us; but if we have secured our heavenly interest, and have cleared our Title to the Kingdome of glory; we have then the greatest ground of comfort and joy in the world, and we may upon right grounds rejoyce under the sharpest Tribulations that we meet with from the hands of men. I shall therefore give you some markes and Characters how we may know whither we have an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven or no. And here
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I might refer you back to those Characters propounded in the Application of the former Doctrine; if we can truly say that God is our father by adoption and regeneration, and that we are his children, then we may safely conclude that we are some of those that have an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven; if we are the children of God then we are co-heirs of God, *Rom. 8.* are entitled to Heaven; try then whether you can conclude that you are the children of God. But because I know not whether ever I shall have liberty to speake to you again from this place, I shall propose some other characters also to help us to passe a right judgement upon our selves in a matter of so great concernment.

First, Then whosoever thou art that wouldest try thy title to the Heavenly glory, thou mayst try it by this; if the design of thy life be to glorifie God, and to promote their Heavenly interest; then thou art one of those that art intituled to the Heavenly inheritance: if thou drivest a Trade for Heaven, and if that the obtaining of Heaven be the principal part of thy care and business, and the great design that thou drivest at in all thy actions; then by this thou mayst try thy Title to Heaven. Apply now this home to thy soul, what Trade and Designe art thou now driving in the World? is it thy main business here to promote thy Temporal, or thine Eternal State? art thou striving more after Earth or Heaven? If thy designe here be after Riches, Honour, or Greatnesse in the world, and makest all thy actions subservient to thy designe; then thou art none of those that have a Title to Heaven; but if it be the business of thy Life, and the Trade that thou drivest in the World to,

to advance Gods glory, and thine Eternal salvation, and dost care for no more of this World then may tend to promote Gods glory and thine eternal happiness: then thou mayst safely conclude that thy name is written in Heaven, and thou hast an interest in that Kingdome. It is the grand mistake of thousands of souls every where, that they pretend to seek after the Kingdome of Heaven, but they seek it only by the by; and their maine designe in the World is somewhat else: as to grow Rich, or Great, or Honourable here: they do not make it their principle business, and their great designe to secure their Title to Heaven: but they look upon Heaven only as a reserve for them, when they can enjoy the world no longer; and therefore they will have some glances, and some faint endeavours that way; but if ever we will enter into Heaven, we must first of all seek Gods Kingdome and his righteousness, *Mat. 6. 33. Luke 12. 31.*

Secondly, Wouldest thou know whither thou hast a Title to the Heavenly glory, or no: thou mayst know it by thy Heavenly mindedness: they that have an interest in the Heavenly Kingdome, they have Heavenly hearts; if their treasure be in Heaven, their hearts will be there also, *Mat. 6. 20, 21. Lay up for your selves treasures in Heaven, where neither Moth, nor Rust can corrupt, nor Thieves break through and steal; for where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also.* And is it so with us, are our hearts taken up with the Heavenly glory? are our meditations and contemplations much on heavenly objects? or else, are they taken up only or mostly with earthly vanities? are our hearts on our Riches, Pleasures, &c. or else are they placed upon Heaven and Heavenly things

things. If we have a Title to the Kingdome of Heaven, our hearts minds and affections will be Heavenly, and taken up with Heavenly Objects, Col. 3. 1, 2. *Ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; set your affections upon things above, and not things on the Earth.*

Thirdly, Wouldest thou know whither thou hast an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven or no? how dost thou like the employment of Heaven? if thou likest the employment of Heaven, then thou mayest comfortably conclude, that thou hast an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven.

Canst thou say that thou delightest to be employed in serving, and in glorifying God, and in worshipping of him in spirit and in truth according to his word? Canst thou say in truth, that thou delightest to do the will of God here on Earth, as it is done by the Angels in Heaven, and the spirits of just men made perfect there? Dost thou take delight to be employed in that employment that the Saints of Heaven are, and shall be for ever imployed in? Dost thou take pleasure to adore, and praise, and magnifie the ever blessed God? Dost thou take pleasure in the duties of Religion, and rejoyce to be conversing with God in prayer, and in other holy exercises, and to be enjoying communion with him? if it be thus with thee as I have now described: this, this will evidently make out thy Title for Heaven.

Many Thousands pretend that their designe is to go to Heaven, and they presumptuously conclude that they have an interest in that Kingdome, when as they like not the Heavenly imployment in themselves or others: and they care not to get acquaintance with

with God here on earth, and are strangers to the duties of Religion, and to a life of holinesse; and perhaps spends an hour in a Week, or it may be in a moneth in secret prayer, or in other holy exercises; and it may be neglect the worship of God in their families too; but if we are unacquainted with the imployment of Heaven, which is to praise, and magnifie, worship and adore God; if thou delightest not so to do, thou canst not conclude that thou hast a Title to Heaven: but if thou hast an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, then thou dost most of all delight in that imployment which hath most of Heaven in it.

Fourthly, If thou hast an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, thou hast a special love to the heirs of heaven; and thou hast a near and dear affection to the people of God, though they be despised, rejected, scorned, and persecuted by the prophane world; and thou dost delight in the company of those on Earth, which are like to be thy companions in Heaven; and thou hadst rather the society of those, howsoever mean and low in the world, that have the truth of grace in them, then of all the stately and glittering gallants of the World, that are strangers to a Life of holinesse; and the more holy and heavenly they are in their hearts, and lives, the more aimable will their company be to thee, 1 *John*. 3. 14. *Psalm* 15. 4. Put thy self to the question whither it be thus with thee, or no, and thou shalt find out thy title to Heaven thereby.

Lastly, If thou hast a Title to Heaven, then thou art so far at a point with all the riches, and pleasures, and enjoyments of the World, as that thou wilt rather forgoe them all, then forsake Christ; and rather part
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with them all, rather then they shall hinder thee in thy way towards Heaven ; and if thou art brought so far at a pinch, as that thou must either forsake thy interest in Christ and Heaven, or to forgoe thy worldly accomodations ; thou art very willing to forgoe them all that thou mayst stick close to Christ, and go forward in thy way to thy heavenly inheritance ; thus it was with the Apostle Paul, *Phil. 3. 7, 8.* But what things (saith he) were gain to me ? those I accounted losse for Christ, *Yea, doubtless I account all things but losse, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the losse of all things ; and do account them but dung that I may win Christ ;* And is it so with us then, when riches, honour, and pleasures doe stand in competition with Christ, and hinder us in our progress in grace and holiness ; are we willing and ready to cast them away, as we would cast away Dung ; if it be thus with us in reality, then we may conclude we have a Title to heaven, and an interest in the eternal glory. By these things Beloved you may try whither you have an interest in heaven or no ; Having finished the Use of Examination, I shall come to the next Use, which is the last that I shall speak unto, which is a Use of Exhortation.

Is it so, that the consideration of a Believers interest in the Heavenly Glory is enough to bear up his spirit under all the Tryals and Tribulations of this Life, then, Oh that you which cannot upon Tryal find, that you have a title to Heaven : that you would labour after an interest in the heavenly glory ; if thou hast no interest there, what good will all the enjoyments of the world do thee ? how quickly will all thy comforts, and pleasures leave thee ? and what
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little cause hast thou to rejoyce in the abundance of outward things; if thou hast no Title to the durable riches: if thou art void of the riches of grace here, and hast no title to the riches of glory hereafter; what wilt thou do in a day of Tryal, and in an hour of trouble and calamity? What wilt thou doe when Losses, Crosses, Troubles and Vexations shall encompass thee about, if thou hast not an Heavenly interest to support thee under them? What wilt thou do, when Pains and Anguish, when Diseases, Sickness and Death shall seize upon thee, if thou hast not a Title to thy Heavenly inheritance; These things will certainly and speedily come upon us, how far off soever we may put them in our own thoughts; the proud looks of the lofty will quickly be turned into an Earthly paleness; though they look as big, and carry themselves as high, as if they had a protection from Hell and the Grave; and those bodies which we now take so much care to please and pamper, will shortly become a feast for worms; though they may be adorned with all the Ornaments that the pride of man can invent and friends, and riches, and all will but accompany us to the Grave, and there leave us; and oh what will then become of us, if we have no interest in Christ and Heaven, and can lay no claim to the everlasting glory?

If you ask me, how we shall do to secure our interest in the Kingdome of Heaven? I answer, it must be by a through closure with Christ by faith, and chusing of him for our Lord and Saviour; God hath ordained that those that are united to Christ by faith here on earth, that they shall be with Christ, and live with Christ in Heaven; Heaven and Glory is the Dowry that God giveth with his Sonne Jesus Christ;

and they that will Marry the Heir shall have the Inheritance : and if we are Christs, then all will be ours, *1 Cor. 3. 22. 23. Whether of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or things present, or things to come, all is yours, and ye are Christs* ; they that have an interest in Christ, have a Title to all. Let us therefore contract our selves to Christ : resolving to be no longer our own, but his ; and to live no longer to our selves, but to him ; let us chuse him to be our Lord and Saviour, and take him upon his own Terms as he is offered to us in the Gospell, to be our King, Priest, and Prophet ; and when we are once thus united to Christ by faith, we shall be coheirs with him of the Heavenly Inheritance ; all this will be ours when we are Christs by a self resignation, and submission ; and when Christ is ours by a believing choice and election ; when we have thus made choice of Christ upon his own terms to be our Lord and Saviour, our Portion and our all : and have given up our selves to him, to be wholly his, and at his dispose : this will undoubtedly give us a firm and an unquestionable title to Heaven.

Secondly, The next addresse that I have to make, is to those that are the Heirs of this Kingdome, and have a Title to this Heavenly Inheritance. Is it so, that a Believers interest in the Kingdome of Heaven is enough to bear up his spirit under all his Troubles and Afflictions, and to keep him from being dismayed under his foreest Tryals and Tribulations that he meeteth withal from the World ; then the Exhortation that I shall give to you, is the same that our Saviour giveth in the Text : *Fear not little Flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* You that have an interest in the heavenly glory ; oh
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be not dismayed nor affrighted at those outward afflictions and tribulations that you meet with here below; it is true, God doth often exercise his dear Children with Tryals, Afflictions and Tribulations: this is the way by which God doth Discipline his Children, while they are in their Minority here; this Believers must count upon before hand: but there is not any of those things that should make a believing Christian dismayed, seeing his eternal concerns are so safe, and his heavenly interest is secure.

And there is no Trouble nor Cross that the Saints can meet withall, but that we are somewhere or other in the Word of God exhorted not to be afraid of it. Do we meet with reproach from men, is that the Cross we undergo? this indeed in heavy, inso-much that the *Psalmist* complains, that his heart was broken by it, *Psal. 69. 20.* Yet the Servants of God, the Heirs of Heaven, are cautioned not to fear that, *Isa. 51. 10. Fear thou not the reproach of Men, nor be afraid of their revilings:* or is the Affliction that thou meetest withall imprisonment for the sake of Christ and of a good Conscience: this is likewise grievous and heavy to be born: yet the heirs of heaven are exhorted not to fear that neither, *Rev. 2. 10.* it is Christs advise to the Church of *Smyrna*, *fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold the Devill shall cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tryed, and you shall have Tribulation Ten dayes; be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life:* Those that have an interest in the Crown of Life; imprisonment for the sake of Christ if God should call them thereunto: nay, put case thou wert to suffer death it self for the sake of Christ: this is the

greatest and sorest of all sufferings : yet the servants of God are cautioned not to fear that neither, for it can be but a bodily death, and it will make way for a better and happier life, *Mat. 10. 28. Fear not them that can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.* Whatsoever thy sufferings be, thou that art a believer, and hast an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, thou art exhorted not to be afraid of it.

Oh Christians ! I beseech you act faith upon your heavenly interest ; I might tell you it can never be more seasonable so to do then now ; the more you act faith hereupon, the more you will be enabled to live above the frowns of a troublesome and vexatious world. Oh look up by an eye of faith upon the recompence of rewards, and you will be able to preferre the afflictions of the Saints, before the vain and transitory pleasures of unregenerate sinners, which endure but for a moment ; and to chuse the greatest affliction before the least sin, as *Moses* did, *Heb. 11. 25, 26.*

And let the joy that is set before you, make you to endure the Crosses of this world, and to despise the shame, as the Captaine of your salvation hath done before you ; and let the hope of the glory of God make you rejoyce, notwithstanding all the scorne and contempt that you meet with from the world.

But because of our frailty, and aptness to be afraid and dismayed at afflictions and tribulations. I shall set before you some considerations, which if well weighed, might (by the blessing of God) doe much to the curing and removing of those fears and discontents that are apt to seize upon us, when we are exposed to Tryals and Losses in the world.

First, Consider Christians you that have secured
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your heavenly interest: are you in sore Troubles, and do you meet with hard dealings from men? it may be you may bring more glory to God by your Afflictions, Losses and Crosses in the world, then if you should alway be in a quiet, prosperous, and serene condition; it may be God may have a greater Revenue of glory by thy Troubles and Tryals, then by thy prosperity in the world; and shall we not be willing to be in such a condition, howsoever unpleasant to our corrupt flesh, in which we may be most serviceable for God; and bring most honour and glory to him. It is a signe that we have little Love to God; or indeed to our own souls, if we doe not prefer the glory of God before our own ease and carnal contentment; what doe we but mock with God in our prayers, when we pray that his name may be glorified, if we are dismayed and discontented when God is glorified by us in our sufferings, because they are tedious and irksome to our flesh. If we are unwilling that God should be glorified by our sufferings: if we are unwilling to honour him in an afflicted state, why do we then in our prayers pretend to beg that God may be glorified? Oh how much is God glorified many times by the sufferings of his people, when as he is dishonoured by the secure and sensual lives of many thousands that are in a prosperous calm and quiet condition in the world: I might give you many instances from the Scripture, to shew that the sufferings of Gods people have rendered very much to the setting forth of the high praises of the Lord. Oh how much have the sufferings of the *Israelites* been all along, of *Job* of *David*, of *Hezekiah*, of the three Children, of *Daniell*, and so under the New Testament; how have the sufferings of *Stephen*, *Paul*, *Silas*,

las, and the rest of the Apostles and Martyrs, resounded to the honour and glory of God, for whom they suffered.

Indeed, Gods people do more honour and glorifie God by their sufferings, then by their doings for him. Let us not then be dismayed, though we may be in a troublesome and suffering Condition; seeing this is a Condition, in the which we are most capable of doing service for God, and of bringing most honour and glory to him.

Secondly, Thou that hast an interest in the Kingdome of Heaven, art thou in an afflicted suffering condition in the world to bear up thy fainting spirits; consider, that affliction and tribulation is that by which God is pleased to cleanse and purge his people from sinne: Afflictions are like Black-soape, which doth seem to soyle the Cloath, and make it more filthy, yet it purgeth and cleanseth it, and maketh it more white at length: it is as the Fire, into which the Gold may be thrown, yet it is not consumed, but refined and purifyed, thereby it loseth only its drosse; so the Saints are not quite consumed by their afflictions, but sanctified, and they lose only that filth, dross, and rust that doth mix it self with grace in their hearts; by this shall the iniquity of *Jacob* be purged, saith God, speaking of Afflictions: and this is all the fruit to take away his sin, and shall we be unwilling to have our sins purged.

It is true, as for those that are Reprobates, God usually lets them alone to go on and dye and perish for ever: when as yet God is pleased to correct his people, and to cast them into the Furnace of Affliction, because he intends mercy to them: and surely it will be known own day, that there can be no greater

greater Judgement befall poor Creatures, then to be let alone without chastisements to take their own swing in sin : and oh how many thousands are now in Torments, for that they were let alone in their sins, and never chastized by Afflictions in their Life time : when as Gods people are chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the World, 1 Cor. 11. 32. And which is easier to be born, external tribulations in this life, or eternal torments in the life to come ; one of these two will certainly befall every man and woman of us, either we shall be chastened here, or condemned hereafter : the wicked are oftentimes let alone here, they are not in trouble as other men, *Psalm* 73. but they are condemned with the world : the godly, they are often chastized of the Lord here, but it is in mercy to them, that they may be purged from sin, and not condemned with the world. And *David* tells us, that by his Afflictions he was reduced from going astray, and brought back again into the Fold of God, *Plal.* 119. 67. *Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy precepts.* And shall we be dismayed at the means whereby we are kept close to God, and are kept from falling away from God ? A man is willing to take a bitter medicine to purge away that disease which would otherways kill him ; nor is he troubled at the working of his Physick, though he have many painful gripes, so long as it tends to the removing of those obnoxious humours and diseases which would otherways bring him to his grave : And shall Christians be afraid of the bitter cup of Afflictions, which by Gods blessing purge away their sins, which are the diseases of their souls, and so preserve them from eternal death ? Thy tryals here are to purge

thee, and cleanse thee, that thou mayest not lye in eternal torments in the world to come. And shall Christians be dismayed at that which tends to their eternal health and salvation, and to the keeping of their souls from Hell. We should rather rejoyce to be in that condition whatsoever it be, by which we may be most purged and preserved from sinne. Standing pools doe usually contract filth and muddie; so those Christians that are settled upon the leeze in a prosperous state and condition, they doe very frequently get filth and corruption; the people of God are never made the freer from sinne by their freedom from outward afflictions. This then is the second consideration to keepe the Saints from being dismayed at their afflictions in the world, because thereby they are purged from sin which would otherwise prove the bane of their souls.

Thirdly, you that are the heirs of Heaven, and have an interest in the eternal glory, you are in affliction and tribulation in the world, be not dismayed; for consider that the things doe tend to the exercising and increase of your graces, and to the making of you eminent in grace and holinesse: and will you be daunted at that which tends to the making of you more holy; will you be grieved at that which tends to the increasing of your faith, patience, humility, heavenly-mindednesse, and to the making of you more eminent for holinesse and godlinesse? Believers are usually greater gainers by their afflictions in the world, then by their external prosperity; yea, many times they are losers by their prosperity, when as they have been great gainers by their troubles and adversity. Oh how many have gained in grace and holinesse by their losses in the world: the servants of God were never more eminent in grace, then when they were
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least and lowest in their outward state: true graces are the diamonds that shine brightest in the darkest night, and these shine clearest in the obscurest night of adversity.

The Saints in Scripture were then most eminent for holiness, and godliness, and all other graces, when they lay under greatest troubles & tribulations from the world, and how exemplary in holiness, and how eminent in faith and heavenly mindedness were the martyrs, when they were afflicted, tormented, imprisoned, burned, and persecuted with the most grievous persecutions from the hands of wicked men: when as the prosperity and pleasures of the wicked did tend to the hardning of them in their sins.

Did we seriously consider how great hinderers riches, and pleasures, and worldly prosperity are to grace and holiness, we should not be so discontented at our mean and afflicted condition in the world nor so over desirous of those accommodations which have proved the bane of so many & the hinderers of their salvation, peace and plenty; honour and prosperity, doth very often increase pride and covetousness, security, and earthly mindedness, when as affliction, tribulation, want, reproach, being sanctified by God doth tend to the exercising and encreasing of patience, humility, and a heavenly conversation; and upon this consideration the Apostle Paul gloried in tribulations because it wrought in him the grace of patience, Rom 5.3. and not onely so (saith he) but we glory in tribulation, also knowing that tribulation worketh patience, &c. There are many souls now in torments for that pride, security, worldlimindedness, and other sins which were nourished and fostered up in their prosperity in the world: and many souls now in heaven which were helped forward in their way thither by the
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the exercise of those graces which were nourished and encreased by their adversity, crosses, and calamities here below. Be not therefore dismayed and discontented Christian with that condition though it be grievous to thy fraile flesh, which doth tend to the encreasing of grace and holiness.

Lastly, thou that art a believer and heir of heaven, art thou in affliction, be not dismayed, because these things being sanctified by God will tend to the fitting of thy soul for and to the bringing of thee nearer to heaven; afflictions and tribulations do tend to the uniting of souls closer to Christ, and to the fitting and preparing them more and more for eternal glory: and hence it is that God hath ordained that through many tribulations we must enter into glory *Act. 14. 22.* God doth discipline his dear children by sorrows and troubles here, and so fit them for to reign with him hereafter, and shall we be dismayed at such a condition that doth tend to the fitting of us for our heavenly inheritance, and to the bringing of us nearer to Christ and salvation. Oh let not afflictions nor tribulations dismay you that have an interest in the kingdom of heaven to support you, but let the consideration of your heavenly interest keep you from fainting at all your afflictions and tribulations that you meet with in your way to heaven.

And now beloved hearers give me leave to trespass a little more upon your patience, seeing this is like to be the last opportunity that I shall have to speak to you from this place, being prohibited to preach unless upon such terms as I confess my conscience dares not submit unto, being therefore enforced to lay down my Ministry, I thought good to let you know that it is neither out of singularity nor stubbornness in opinion, which many it may be may conjecture, but

but because the things required are such as my conscience cannot close withall; could I see a sufficient warrant from the word of God for those Ceremonies and other things that are enjoined, I should readily submit unto them, for I can take the great God to witness with my conscience that nothing in the world grieveth me a hundred part so much as to be hindered from the work of the Ministry, and to be disabled from serving my great Master Christ in that employment: but seeing I cannot finde my warrant thence I dare not go against my conscience, and so doe evil that good may come thereby. Those strict prohibitions recorded, *Deut.* 4. 2. & 12. 32. *Pro.* 30. 6. and in other Scriptures, wherein we are prohibited to make any addition to Gods own institutions in his worship, and the terrible threatnings pronounced against those that shall transgresse in this particular, hath such impression upon my heart, that I dare not give my assent nor consent to any thing in Gods worship which is not warranted from his word; but I think it the lesser evil of the two to expose my selfe to sufferings in the world rather then to undergo the checks and reproaches of a wounded & grieved conscience.

Dearly Beloved, While I had liberty to speak unto you, may I say with the Apostle *Paul*, *Act.* 20. 27. I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God; but according to that strength and ability that God hath given me, have laboured to instruct you, and to press home upon you those great and saving truths which are of necessity to be known and practised, in order to Salvation. And as the Apostle *Paul* writ to the *Philippians*, *Phil.* 1. 8. So may I say to you that God is my record, how greatly I have longed after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ: your conversation unto God, and eternal salvation,

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is that which I have had in my eye ; for this I have Prayed, for this I have Preached, for this I have studied, neither is there any thing more joyous to me, then to hear of any of my hearers that are walking in the truth, and that have set their faces towards Heaven.

But seeing God is pleased (for ends best known to himselve) to suffer my Mouth, together with the Mouths of many others, my Dear and Reverend Brethren in the Ministry, to be stopped I desire to leave a word or two with each of you, which I would have you to look upon as the words of a dying Minister, or of a dead Minister, in a civil sence ; and therefore suffer them to take the deeper impression upon your hearts; I shall therefore direct a word or two to three sorts of persons.

First, To those that do much rejoyce at this time, and that have earnestly looked and longed for it ; to such who hug themselves, and make merry because the troublers of *Israel* (as wicked men account the Ministers of Christ to be) which have told them of their sins, and reprov'd them of their carnal, sensual, unholy lives, are not suffered to preach, nor to trouble them with the unpleasing Doctrines of repentance, conversion, mortification of sinne, and other truths which they dislike ; to those who look upon the faithful, laborious, convincing Preachers of the Word of God, to be their enemies, because they have told them the truth, and could not sooth them up in their sins; and rejoyce as the inhabitants of the earth did rejoyce over the witnesses, and make merry, *Rev. II. 10.*

To you I say, whosoever you are, that none have more need of our labours, and of our preaching, then you ; and if you were but acquainted truly with

with your own state in which you are (which is a state of death and wrath, without you repent, and turne, and become new Creatures) you would be of other minds then now you are : and turn your mirth and jollity into mourning. Consider, that it is never the better with any City when the Watchmen are removed ; nor for a Traveller when the light is gone, which should direct him in his way ; and it cannot be but sad, when so many Thousands of godly Ministers, which by their doctrine and lives have been as lights in the world, shall be extinguished and silenced: believe it Sirs, there is no good groping out our way to Heaven in the dark, when as we know not whither our next step will be in Heaven, or Hell : in eternal joy, or misery. A Sick man is never the nearer health, because his Physitian is not suffered to speak to him of the danger of his disease ; and carnal and ungodly men are never the nearer their salvation, because their faithfull Ministers are not suffered to preach to them of the evil and danger of their sinns, which are the hinderers of it. I shall only commend to your consideration, that one Scripture, which I would have you be often reading, and thinking on, as it is recorded 1 Pet. 4. 17. 18. The time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God ; & if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of Christ ; and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly, and the sinner appear? if God begin with his faithful Ministers to chastise and afflict them ; oh what then will become of the wicked & ungodly world ; if the godly drink first of this Cup, it is because the wicked shall drink the dregs of it.

A second sort of persons which I shall speak to, are such, who are halting between two ; that are like *Agrippa*, almost perswaded to be Christians ; that have
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some convictions upon their consciences, of the excellency of the waies of God, but yet their interest leads them another way, they are unwilling to expose themselves to any troubles or tribulations, by going against the stream of the world; they are afraid that if they should be diligent in the duties of religion, and should walk holily and closely with God, that then they should be reproached and scorned, or persecuted by the world and therefore they will go on a little way, but no farther then that they may retreat back again with ease and safety as to their carnal and worldly interests; to such whosoever you are I must tell you, First, that you must go beyond the common sort of the world, unless you intend to come short of heaven, you must not take the example of the multitude to be a sufficient warrant for you to walke by; the broad way, though it be to your corrupt natures the most pleasant way, yet it is not the safest but the most dangerous way; and the narrow way of holiness and godliness will be found at last to be *the way leading to life, though there be but few that finde it, Mat. 7. 13, 14.* they that are afraid of making too much ado for heaven, they are like to have nothing at all to doe with heaven; it is a Christians duty, and should be his care not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their mind, that they may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, Rom. 12. 2.

Secondly, you must not stick at afflictions & crosses in the world if you intend to go to Heaven. Christs crosse is the first thing that must be learnt by Christs Disciples, Luk. 14. 27. you must account upon it before hand, that if you will live godly in Christ Jesus, you must suffer persecution. 1 Tim. 3. 5. You must not be afraid of the reproaches of the ungodly, nor flinch

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at oppositions and tribulations if you intend to be everlastingly happy: the fearful are in the forefront of them that march to hell, Rev. 21. 8. *but the fearfull and unbelieving, and abominable, &c. shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* The fearful you see are set down in the front in that black list there mentioned; but the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Thirdly, the end will pay for all; the kingdome of Heaven will make you amends for all the tribulations that you meet with in your way to heaven.

Lastly, I shall speak a word to those that feare the Lord, and are diligent in the practice of godlinesse, that are very much grieved that their faithful Teachers should be removed into corners, my advice that I have to give you besides what I have spoken before, is, the same with Pauls to the Philippians, chap. 4. 1. *My brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved.* Consider your heavenly interest, and let that beare you up under all your worldly troubles & persecutions: let not the terror nor threats of men nor devils make you stir a part from the doctrine which is according to godliness, though you may be scorned and afflicted by men, yet the day wil come when you will be publickly owned and honoured by the Lord of glory, and when Christ which is your life shall appear then shall you appear with him in glory: be not affrighted at the sufferings of your Ministers, though they should be far greater then now they are; nor discouraged at the backslidings of hypocriticall professors, who having formerly made fair pretences to Religion and reformation yet are turned with the dog to their old vomit again, and by their so doing doe declare that

it is their carnall interests only that they look unto, and therefore they will be for religion and reformation so long as that may be promoted thereby, and no longer: but labour to imitate the heroick courage of *Joshua*, who resolved that he and his house would serve the Lord, though all *Israel* should forsake him and backslide from him. Stand fast, I beseech, you in the faith, quit your selves like men, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Let not the enmity nor opposition of the ungodly make you to forsake the duties of religion, and the waies of holiness; think not the better of that way, or of those persons meely because they prosper in the world, nor the worse of those meely because they are persecuted and afflicted. What were those that were tortured not accepting deliverance, that had tryall of cruell mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment, that were stoned, that were sawen in sunder, that were tempted, that were slain by the sword: they that wandered about in sheep skins, and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted tormented, *Heb. 11. 35, 36, 37. They were such of whom the world was not worthy.* vers. 38. True holiness and the fear of God, are never the less lovely in Gods account because it is rejected, scorned, and condemned by the wicked world; and sin and prophaneness is never a whit the more pleasing unto Christ because it is in fashion and practised by the greatest or most of men. Finally my brethren, commit your selves and your way unto the Lord, and wait patiently for him, he will command deliverance for you in his own time. Snatch not after deliverance by any preposterous & unlawful courses, before God holdeth it out to you, least you provoke him to derain it the longer from you.

To conclude all, I shall take leave of you in the words of the holy Ghost recorded, *Acts 20. 32. Heb. 13. 20, 21.* And now brethren, I shall commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified. And the God of peace which brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ the great shepheard of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to doe his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Mr. Watson's



Mr. VVATSONS
SERMON
Against
POPERY.

I Cor. 10. Chap. 14. Verse.

Wherefore my dearly Beloved, flee from Idolatry.

VWhen I consider that saying of the blessed Apostle St. Paul, *I am pure from the blood of all men*, Acts 20. 26. And that which made him say so, was, because he had not *shun'd to declare*, (unto his hearers, then committed to his charge) *the whole Counsel of God*: Paul had been faithful to the Souls of people; he had preached up Truth, and preached down Error; The consideration of which, hath put me at this time on this Scripture, *Wherefore*

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